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COMMENTARY 7

UPON THE

2.L.i.

Historical BOOKS

OF THE

OLD TESTAMENT.

VOL. II.

CONTAINING

JOSHUA.
JUDGES.
RUTH.
I. SAMUEL.
II. SAMUEL.
I. KINGS.
II. KINGS.

I. CHRONICLES.
II. CHRONICLES.
EZRA.
NEHEMIAH.
ESTHER.

BY THE

Right Reverend Father in GOD,
Dr. SYMON PATRICK,
Late Lord Bishop of *ELY.*

The Fifth Edition Corrected.

L O N D O N:

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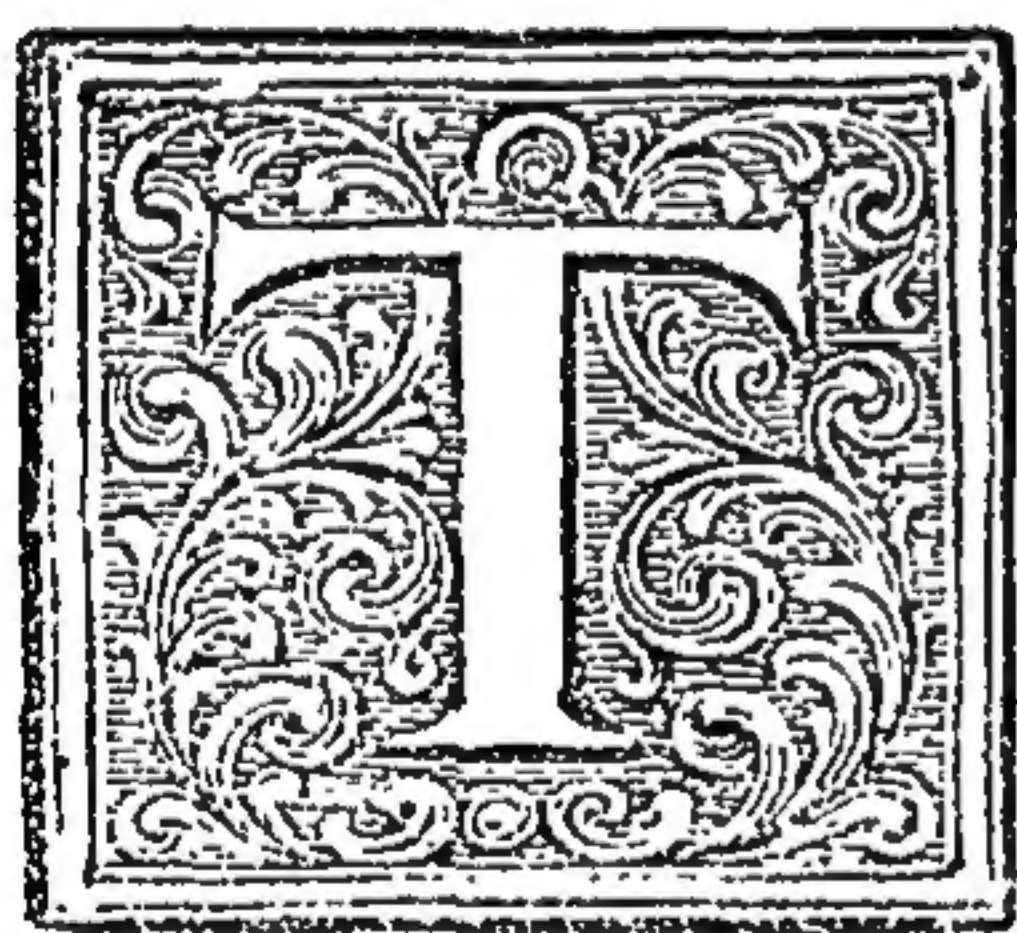
J. Mynde Sculp.

A

COMMENTARY

UPON THE

Book of JO SHUA.



THIS Title doth not necessarily signify that this Book was written by JO SHUA, as the five foregoing were by Moses, but only that it contains the Acts done by Joshua. Yet there wants not Arguments to prove that Joshua was the Author of this Book: For though Grotius and many other modern Writers, with some of the Ancients, think they find Reasons in the Book itself against this Opinion; yet the ancient Talmudists, and several of the latter, ascribe it to him, being principally induced thereunto by those Words in the last Chapter of this Book, Ver. 26. which I cannot say are an evident Proof of it (for those Words may relate only to the Covenant mentioned in that Chapter;) but thus they say expressly in *Bava Bathra*, Cap. 1. *Joshua wrote his own Book, and the eight last Verses of the Law; and then concerning the five last Verses of this Book, they write after this manner in the same Place; Eleazar wrote the 29th Verse, &c. of the xxivth Chapter, as Phineas did Ver. 33.* And there are Men of

excellent Learning who have undertaken to answer all that can be objected unto this, (particularly *Daniel Huetius* in his *Demonstratio Evang. Propos. IV.*) Which Objections I shall consider in their proper Places, where they seem to arise in this Book.

Which the *Jews* reckon among the first Prophets (as they call them) tho' it contain only an History of what passed till the Death of Joshua; which, in all likelihood, he would not neglect to write himself, as Moses did, what passed in his Time, that every Tribe and every Family might have an unquestionable Title to their Inheritance under his own Hand, who had by God's Order made a Division of the Land; and that all Posterity might see the Promises made unto them by Moses were so punctually fulfilled, that there failed not ought of any good Thing which the LORD had spoken, but all came to pass; as he observes xxi. 45. and that in a short Time; for this Book contains the History of the *Israelites*, from the Death of Moses to the Death of Joshua; that is, as some compute, for the Space of seventeen Years, or rather near twenty-seven. See upon xiv. 10.

C H A P. I.

Ver. 1. *NOW after the Death of Moses.*] Thus those Books are wont to begin, whose Argument relates to the Book before-going. As the Book of Judges is in this manner connected with this of Joshua, and the Book of Ruth with that of Judges; and the LXX. make such a Preface to join the Book of Lamentations with the Prophecy of Jeremiah.

After the Death of Moses.] I suppose immediately after the Days of mourning for him were ended, Deut. xxxiv. 8.

The Servant of the LORD.] See Deut. xxxiv. 5.

It came to pass that the LORD spake unto Joshua the Son of Nun.] Out of the Sanctuary, it is most likely, from whence he had spoken to him a little before Moses his Death, and made him a Promise of what he orders him now to accomplish;—(Deut. xxxi. 14, 23.) and where Eleazar was appointed long before to ask Counsel for him, when there was great Occasion, Numb. xxvii. 21.

Moses Minister.] Who had attended upon Moses from the Beginning, in his highest Employment, Exod. xxiv. 13. Deut. i. 38.

Ver. 2. *Moses my Servant is dead.*] He hath finished his Work, and can do me no farther Service.

Now therefore arise.] Put an end therefore unto your mourning for him, and go about the Business which he hath left thee to perform.

Go over this Jordan.] Within Sight of which they lay encamped.

Thou and all this People, unto the Land which I do give to them, even to the Children of Israel.] As he promised when he changed his Name from Oshea into Joshua, Numb. xiii. 16. Deut. i. 38. Deut. iii. 28.

Ver. 3. *Every Place.*] Within the Limits mentioned in the next Verse.

That the Sole of your Foot shall tread upon, that have I given you, as I said unto Moses.] He would not have them doubt what Moses said from him, (Deut. xi. 24.) tho' he were dead.

Ver. 4. *From the Wilderness.*] This was the Bounds of the Country, on the South.

And this Lebanon.] Which was the Bounds on the North. And Joshua seems now to have been in the Sight of it; to which the Divine Majesty directed his Observation, as the most eminent Mountain in those Parts of the World.

Even unto the great River, the River Euphrates.] Which was the Eastern Bounds, and called by other Authors the great River, as I have observed on Deut. i. 7.

All the Land of the Hittites.] Who were a very powerful People in the Country, dwelling, together with the Amorites, in the mountainous Parts of it, Numb. xiii. 29. some of which were of the Race of the Giants, and are therefore particularly mentioned, to shew that the most terrible People should not be able to stand before Joshua; but he should either destroy them, or expel them, and make them flee their Country,

as these Hittites did; of whom we read, and of their Kings, 2 Kings vii. 6.

Unto the great Sea.] The Mediterranean, which was the Western Border, as it here follows.

Towards the going down of the Sun, shall be your Coast.] See upon Deut. xi. 24. and other Places.

Ver. 5. *There shall not any Man be able to stand before thee all the Days of thy Life.*] Deut. vii. 24.

As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.] To subdue all the People of Canaan before him; as he did the Egyptians, the two Kings of the Amorites, and the Midianites before Moses: To counsel also, and advise him in all Difficulties, as he had done Moses.

I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.] See upon Deut. xxxi. 6, 8. On which Promise they relied in future Times, 1 Kings viii. 57.

Ver. 6. *Be strong and of a good Courage.* This Charge he had given him before the Death of Moses, Deut. xxxi. 23. And David gave the same to Solomon, 1 Chron. xxviii. 20.

For unto this People shalt thou divide for an Inheritance the Land which I swear unto their Fathers to give them.] He had promised him, in the Place before named, that he should bring them into the Land, &c. and here now adds, that he would settle them in the Possession of it, by assigning every one their Portion in it; which he did by such a divine Direction, as silenced all Disputes about it.

Ver. 7. *Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the Law, which Moses my Servant commanded thee.*] It requires the greatest Courage and Resolution, especially in a Governor, to be truly pious and religious, by observing the Laws himself, and seeing them observ'd by others.

Turn not from it to the Right-Hand or to the Left.] By adding to it, or taking away from it, Deut. xii. ult. or, more simply, No way deviate from it; for it is a Metaphor from Men in a Journey, who go strait forward in the plain High-Way, and turn not aside into By-paths, which lead they know not whither.

That thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.] Or do wisely, as it is in the Margin; for it is the greatest Policy to be truly religious.

Ver. 8. *This Book of the Law.*] The Original of which was preserved in the Sanctuary; from whence God now spake to him, Deut. xxxi. 26.

Shall not depart out of thy Mouth.] He was to read in it continually, that he might instruct others, and be thereby an Example to all future Governors and Kings, according to the Law, Deut. xvii. 18, 19. By which it is evident, that Joshua had a Copy of the Law; which was then written and extant in his Time.

But thou shalt meditate therein Day and Night.] His other weighty Employments were not to hinder him from pondering, as well as reading, the Law of God; because it was to be his Rule in all his private Transactions and publick Administrations.

That thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein.] Which was not possible,

ble, without the serious and attentive Consideration before mentioned.

For then thou shalt make thy Way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good Success.] Or, do wisely. Prudence and Prosperity go together; but no Prudence comparable to the strict Observance of the Laws of God, upon which the Felicity of Kingdoms and States depend.

Ver. 9. *Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good Courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.]* He confirms him in the Resolution he had put into him (Ver. 6.) by two Arguments, the Divine Vocation, and the Divine Presence with him. See Deut. i. 29, 30. xxxi. 6, 7, 8. The latter of which the Targum thus expresseth, *For the WORD of the LORD thy God shall be for thy Help, in every Place where thou goest.* See Ver. 14.

Ver. 10. *Then Joshua commanded the Officers of the People, saying.]* I have often observed, that as SCHOPHETIM were Judges, who heard Causes in their Courts, and pronounced Sentence; so SCHOTERIM were inferior Officers belonging to the Court, who summoned People to attend, and executed the Sentence: For after Moses had mentioned (Deut. i. 15.) the Chief of their Tribes, Captains over Thousands, and Hundreds, and Fifties, and Tens, he at last mentions these Officers among their Tribes; who were employed, it appears by this Place, in the Camp, as well as in the Courts of Justice.

Ver. 11. *Pass thro' the Host, and command the People, saying, Prepare you Victuals.]* They were to make Proclamation not only in all the four Camps of Israel, but in the several Tribes who were under those Standards, to provide themselves with such Victuals as the Country of Sikon and Og, which they had lately conquered, afforded. For being, after three Days, (iii. 1.) to remove very early in the Morning, perhaps they might not have had Time to gather Manna sufficient, and to prepare it before they began their March.

For within three Days.] See iii. 1, 2.

It shall pass over this Jordan.] Which was not so far from Shittim, where they now lay, but they could see it.

And go to possess the Land, which the LORD your God giveth you to possess it.] He constantly remembers them of this Donation from God; both to strengthen their Faith, and to excite their Thankfulness. *For they gat not the Land in Possession by their own Sword, neither did their Arm save them; but his Right Hand, &c. because he had a Favour to them, as the Psalmist speaks, xlv. 3.*

Ver. 12. *And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to Half the Tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying.]* Here he begins to do according to the Command of Moses, as God before directed him, Ver. 7, 8. For Moses had given this Charge to the Reubenites, &c. when he gave them their Possession on this side Jordan, Numb. xxxii. 20, 21, &c. and put them in Mind of it again, Deut. iii. 18, &c.

Ver. 13. *Remember the Word which Moses the Servant of the LORD commanded you, saying.]*

It is very observable, how gently and not imperiously Joshua exercises his Authority, at his first Entrance upon his Office. For he only puts them in Mind of what Moses required from them, and leaves them to reflect upon the Promise they made to him.

The LORD your God hath given you Rest, and hath given you this Land.] That is, actually bestowed upon them a Country to settle in. For here their Wives, and Children, and Cattle remained, (with a sufficient Number of Persons to look after them) when they marched into Canaan, as it follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 14. *Your Wives, your little ones, and your Cattle, shall remain in the Land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but ye shall pass before your Brethren armed.]* March in the Front of them, to shew their Forwardness to bring them into the same happy Condition with themselves.

All the mighty Men of Valour to help them.] Such as Joshua picked out; for it is evident they did not all go over; but only Forty Thousand of them, iv. 13. The rest, tho' fit for War, were left to defend their Wives, Children, and Flocks, while those mighty Men of Valour went to help their Brethren.

Ver. 15. *Until the LORD have given your Brethren Rest, as he hath given you.]* A settled Possession of the Land of Canaan, as they had of the Land of the two Kings of the Amorites.

And they also have possessed the Land which the LORD your God giveth them.] He would have them look upon the Conquest of the Land as certain, because God had made a Grant of it to their Brethren.

Then ye shall return to the Land of your Possession, and enjoy it, which Moses, the LORD's Servant, gave you on this side Jordan, towards the Sun-rising.] According to the Agreement which Moses had made with them, Numb. xxxiii. 20, 21, 22.

Ver. 16. *And they answered Joshua, saying, All that thou commandest us, we will do; and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go.]* It is likely, this was the Answer not only of the Reubenites, Gadites, and Manassites, but of all the rest of the Tribes: Before whom, Joshua put these two Tribes and an Half in Mind of their Duty: Which they all engage to perform exactly; these Words containing a full Recognition of Joshua's Authority, and their absolute Submission to it.

Ver. 17. *According as we hearkned unto Moses in all Things, so will we hearken unto thee.]* Here they acknowledge his Authority to be equal to that of Moses, who was undoubtedly set over them by God; as they now own Joshua to be.

Only the LORD thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses.] These Words are not a Restriction of their Obedience, which did not depend upon his Successes; but a solemn Prayer to God, of whom they desired no other Governor than Joshua, that he would make him as victorious as Moses was over all their Enemies. Therefore some translate the Words, not *Only*, but *May the LORD thy God, &c. or Since the LORD thy God hath promised to be with thee.* The Targum paraphrase these Words as he did, Ver.

ver. 9. Only let the *WORD* of the LORD thy God be thy Helper, as he was to Moses.

Ver. 18. *Whosoever he be that doth rebel against thy Commandment, and will not hearken unto thy Words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to Death.*] This seems to be the Voice of all the People, and of their Elders, or a Decree made by the Elders, as the *Jews* understand it: Who looking upon Joshua to be a King, as Moses was, extend this to all the Kings of *Israel* in following Times. So Guil. Schickard observes out of Maimonides in his *Mischpat Hammelech*, Cap. IV. Theor. XIV. p. 101. But it should rather be said, that Joshua was a King and a Prophet as Moses was; and the Law, as *Rusi* observes, ordered him to be put to Death that transgressed the Orders of Moses, and of a Prophet.

Only be strong, and of a good Courage.] He had the greater Reason to be courageous, since they resolved, as one Man, to stand by him, and never to disobey him. And therefore the Word *Rak*, which we translate *only*, should rather be translated *therefore*, as it plainly signifies, xiii. 6. where, speaking of the Land that remained to be possessed, God promises to drive out the Inhabitants, and *therefore* bids Joshua to divide it to the *Israelites* for an Inheritance.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND Joshua the Son of Nun sent.*] Or *had sent*, before the Directions given to the Officers, mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, ver. 10, 11. which best agrees with the 22d Verse of this Chapter, and the rest of the Story.

Out of Shittim] Which was in the Plains of Moab, where *Israel* now lay, Deut. xxxiv. 1. called *Abel-Shittim*, Numb. xxxiii. 49.

Two Men.] Which were sufficient for the Business they went about.

To spy secretly.] So that none were privy to it among the *Israelites*, but Joshua: Who, it is probable, did not send them without an Order from God, who intended to dispose Things so, that they should bring back to him a great Encouragement to his Faith.

Saying, go view the Land.] Not the whole Country of *Canaan*, but only that Part of it which lay about *Jericho*, as it here follows: Whose Fortifications they were to observe, and the Approaches to it, with the Strength that was in it.

And they went.] Over the Fords of *Jordan*, I suppose, mentioned ver. 7.

And came into an Harlot's House, called Rahab] Who kept a Publick House, or an Inn, to entertain Strangers: By going into which, they thought they would be less suspected of any Design. The Word *Zonab*, which is commonly translated an *Harlot*, the *Chaldee* Paraphrase renders *Pundakitha*; which is plainly the *Greek* Word *πανδοχία*, signifying she kept a House of publick Reception. And so St. *Chrysostom* calls this Woman, in his second Sermon of Repentance, *πανδοχέυτριαν* for there is no doubt she kept a Publick House.

But such Persons, in those Days, made their Bodies as publick as their Houses; and therefore she is constantly called *Rahab* the Harlot, by the Antients; and even by two Apostles, who call her *πέρνη*, Hebr. xi. 21. James ii. 25. For so she had been; tho' now it is probable, converted by the Faith which was wrought in her. Which was so eminent, that she was not only admitted into the Society of God's People, but married into a noble Family of the Tribe of *Judah*, from whom *Christ* sprung, Matth. i. 5. and is propounded as an Example of lively Faith unto all Christians, Hebr. xi. 31. Jam. ii. 25.

And lodged there.] Took up their Lodging in her House, by a divine Direction, and appeared afterwards.

Ver. 2. *And it was told the King of Jericho.*] Who was not negligent, we may well think, to set a Watch, to observe who came in and went out of the City.

Saying, Behold, there came Men in hither to Night.] In the Evening, which was the most proper Time to come into the City undiscovered, because then the People, whose Business lay out of the City, were generally going home to their own Houses.

Of the Children of Israel.] As they judged by their Habit, or Language, or Aspect.

To search out the Country.] For they could not think they came for any other End.

Ver. 3. *And the King of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the Men that are come to thee, which entered into thy House, for they be come to search out all the Country.*] He sent some Officers with a Warrant to apprehend them, and to require her to deliver them up into their Hands, as Enemies of their Country.

Ver. 4. *And the Woman took the two Men, and hid them.*] Or rather *had hidden* them, before the Officers came; having heard, it is likely, a Rumour, that they were discovered, and Search would be made for them.

And said thus, There came Men unto me, but I wist not whence they were.] She could not deny that she received such strange Guests, but would not own that she knew from what Country they came; nor was it her Business to make such Enquiry, her House being open unto all.

Ver. 5. *And it came to pass, about the Time of shutting of the Gate.*] The Gate of the City, next to her House, which was wont to be shut (as they are now in all well-governed Cities) at a certain Hour.

When it was dark.] And consequently few or none stirring in the Streets.

The Men went out, whither they went I wot not.] She would have them think, they went both out of her House, and out of the City; tho' she knew not which way they went, it being dark.

Pursue after them quickly, for ye shall overtake them.] Yet it was so little a while since they went out, that she would have them believe, they could not, if they made Haste, but overtake them before they got over *Jordan*. For if they were *Israelites*, it might be certainly concluded they went that Way. No body can say, that *Rahab* did not tell an Untruth;

truth; but this may be said in her Excuse: That it is no wonder if she thought it lawful, if not necessary, so to do, for the saving of the Life of innocent Men. Since several great Philosophers have been of that Opinion, and some of the ancient Fathers of the Church; particularly St. Austin confesses it to be a very difficult Question, Cap. XV. *ad Consentinum*. And Arias Montanus upon this very Place, makes it one's Duty to elude those, who we think intend to do Mischief to others. Which he pretends to justify by many Examples, in a Discourse concerning Mens true and certain Duties. But that is too bold an Undertaking; since the Fathers before St. Austin, and all the Jews condemn this Practice.

Ver. 6. *But she brought them up, &c. or rather, she had brought them up to the Roof of the House.*] Which was made flat, so that Men might lie or walk upon it in those Countries. See Deut. xxii. 8.

And hid them with the Stalks of Flax, which she had laid in order upon the Roof.] Covered them all over with the Stalks of Flax, which I suppose were newly cut, and laid upon the Roof of the House to be dried by the Sun, till they were fit to be peeled. Or, as some think, these were Stalks of Flax cut the Year before; and made use of now to shew that no body was gone upon the Roof, where she laid them.

Ver. 7. *And the Men pursued after them the Way to Jordan, unto the Floods.*] Where Jordan was so shallow that Men might wade, or so narrow that they might soon swim over it. There the Pursuers lay, three Days, waiting to catch them in their Return.

And as soon as they which pursued them were gone out, they shut the Gate.] Which being opened to let the Pursuers out, was immediately shut again; that if the Spies lurk'd in the City, they might not escape in the Dark; and that no other Person might enter, who they might possibly think, lay watching an Opportunity to get in.

Ver. 8. *And before they were laid down.*] To compose themselves to Sleep; which after their Journey they might be glad to take any where.

She came up unto them, upon the Roof.] To bring them down, it is likely, to a more commodious Lodging.

Ver. 9. *And she said unto the Men, I know that the LORD hath given you the Land.*] Wonder not that I have taken such Care of your Preservation; for I believe in the LORD as you do, and know that he hath bestowed this Country upon you, for your Possession.

And that your Terror is fallen upon us, and that all the Inhabitants of the Land faint because of you.] She was the more confident of their Success; because she observed the People of the Land were struck with such a Dread of them, as not to be able to defend their Country against them. See Deut. xi. 25.

Ver. 10. *For we have heard how the LORD dried up the Water of the Red Sea for you, when you came out of Egypt.*] And there overthrew Pharaoh and his Host, after he had smitten him and his Country, with divers miraculous Plagues. The Report of which was come to them, as well as their passing though the

Sea: Which though it were forty Years ago, was remembered with Astonishment.

And what you did unto the two Kings of the Amorites that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed.] This was a thing of fresh Memory, and could not but strike them with Consternation; these two Kings being very potent; and their near Neighbours and Allies. For they were part of the Amorites, who dwelt in the mountainous Parts of this Country; as was before observed.

Ver. 11. *And as soon as we heard these things.*] As Moses prophesied they would, Exod. xv. 14, 15.

Our Hearts did melt.] The same Phrase in Deut. i. 28. where we translate it *discouraged*; and so it is here explained in the next Words.

Neither did there remain any more Courage in any Man, because of you.] the most valiant among them were utterly disheartned.

For the LORD your God, he is God in Heaven above, and in the Earth beneath.] This is a plain Confession of the true God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth; wherein he rules and governs all things according to his Pleasure. This is her Faith celebrated by the Apostle to the Hebrews, which moved her to entertain the Spies, and to preserve them with the Danger of her own Life, if she had been discovered.

Ver. 12. *Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD.*] The Targum hath it, *by the WORD of the LORD.*] An Oath was the greatest Security that could be desired for the Performance of what they promised. For all Nations expected grievous Punishments would fall upon perjured Persons; which they that feared the LORD, the true God, above all Men dreaded. See Selden, Lib. II. *de Synedr.* Cap. XI. N. IV.

Since I have shewed you Kindness.] As they could not but acknowledge.

That ye will also shew Kindness to my Father's House, and give me a true Token.] She asked two things of them; first, that she and her whole Family might be preserved, as she had preserved them; and then that they would give her such a Token, as should not fail her; but upon the Sight of it, the Israelites should abstain from doing them any Hurt.

Ver. 13. *And that you will save alive my Father and my Mother, and my Brethren, and my Sisters.*] This is a particular Explication of what she meant by *her Father's House*, in the foregoing Verse; and shews that she had no Husband, nor Children.

And all that they have, &c.] All her Kindred, as we translate it, vi. 23. Or the Children of her Brethren and Sisters: Or perhaps, all their Cattle, that they could bring with them into her House.

Ver. 14. *And the Men answered her, Our Life for yours.*] They swore to her (it appears from ver. 17.) and wished they might perish, if they did not preserve her and her Family. For they did not doubt but Joshua would ratify what they promised, though without his Authority, for the publick Good and Safety.

If ye utter not.] Do not divulge or declare to any one.

This our Business.] In the Hebrew, *this our Word.* i. e. this Agreement they had made with

with her. Left others should shelter themselves under her Roof, or use that Token they intended to give her; and thereby secure themselves from Destruction. In this they shewed great Prudence and Management; taking care that their Gratitude might not prove an Obstruction to the publick Justice.

And it shall be when the LORD hath given us the Land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee.] Upon this Condition, they promise, when they had taken *Jericho* (for that's here meant by *the Land*, v. 1.) they would keep their Word faithfully with her, and be as kind to her as she had been to them.

Ver. 15. *Then she let them down by a Cord, through the Window.]* Which in those Countries were large, as appears by the Story of *Jezebel*, whom her Eunuchs threw down out of a Window, 2 Kings ix. 30, 32.

For her House was upon the Town Wall.] Both the Time (which was in the Night) and the Place were very commodious to contrive their Escape; because her House was adjoining to the Wall of the City.

And she dwelt upon the Wall.] I take the Meaning to be, that the Apartment she reserved for herself was next to the Wall, and built upon it; the rest of her House towards the Street being kept for Strangers. This gave her the fair Opportunity, without any Noise, to let them down.

Ver. 16. *And she said unto them, Get ye to the Mountain, lest the Pursuers meet you.]* This was prudent Advice, not to go towards *Jordan* presently, but first to one of the Mountains, wherewith the Plain of *Jericho* was surrounded, as *Josephus* tells us, Lib. I. de Bello Judaico, Cap. 12, 13. and Lib. V. Cap. 4. And the Scripture itself informs us as much, 2 Kings ii. 15, 16.

And hide yourselves there.] In some of the Caves, which were frequent in the Mountains.

Three Days.] For so long she thought the Pursuers might stay about *Jordan*, waiting for their Return.

Until the Pursuers be returned; and afterward may ye go your way.] Which she thought probably would be within that Time; and perhaps she understood their Orders were to stay no longer.

Ver. 17. *And the Men said unto her.]* As she was about to let them down; for it was not safe to have this Discourse together after they were down; which might have been overheard by the Watch.

We will be blameless of this thy Oath, which thou hast made us to swear.] The Meaning is, that it should not be their Fault, if their Oath was not kept; and therefore they now name the Token, upon which the Preservation of her Family should depend; with some other Conditions that were reasonable to be observed. Which they mention to shew, how studious they were not to be guilty of violating their Oath.

Ver. 18. *Behold, when we come into the Land, thou shalt bind this Line of Scarlet Thread.]* It is called a Cord before, ver. 15. and no doubt consisted of so many Threads twisted together,

as made it a Line strong enough to hold the Weight of a Man's Body, and not break. But there are those who doubt whether the Hebrew Word *Scheni* signify any thing of the Colour, but only a twined or twisted Cord, *funiculum conduplicatum*, or *contortum*, from *Shanab* to double. See *Gataker* in his *Miscellanea*, Cap. xl.

In the Window which thou hast let us down by.] Or rather, *dost let us down by*. For she was about to do it, but had not done it, when they had this Discourse with her. Some refer this to the Window at which she let them out; but it is most natural to refer it to the Line. For by that they were let down; and it was to remain in the Window, that the *Israelites* might see it, as the Token that that was the House, which was to be saved. *Procopius Gazæus* compares this Scarlet Line with the Blood which *Moses* ordered to be struck upon the Side Posts of their Doors, which was a Token they should be preserved, *Exod.* xii. 7, 13.

And thou shalt bring thy Father, and thy Mother, and thy Brethren, and all thy Father's Household home to thee.] That is, all their Children; and perhaps near Relations, such as Uncles, Aunts, and Cousins; as we seem to understand it, vi. 23. And one cannot but think, that Great Grand-fathers, and Grand-mothers, if she had any alive, were comprehended in these Words.

Ver. 19. *And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the Door of thy House into the Street, his Blood shall be on his Head, and we will be guiltless.]* They would be bound to preserve none but those who kept in the House. Which was but reasonable, for they did not know how to distinguish them from others, if they were in the Street.

And whosoever shall be with thee in the House, his Blood shall be on our Head, if any Hand be upon him.] They would as soon die themselves, as let any of those perish. An Emblem of our Safety and Salvation, by continuing constantly in the Church in Faith and Holiness. For her House was a very fit Figure of the Church, especially of the *Gentiles*; who like her, had gone a whoring after Idols, but were converted to serve the living God.

Ver. 20. *And if thou utter this our Business, then we will be quit of the Oath, which thou hast made us to swear.]* They repeat the Condition mentioned ver. 14. as of great Importance. See there.

Ver. 21. *And she said, According to your Word, so be it.]* She agreed to all the Conditions they imposed upon her.

And she sent them away, and they departed.] After this mutual Agreement, confirmed with an Oath.

And she bound the Scarlet Line in the Window.] Immediately, as some think; that the Spies might know where to look for it hereafter; and that she might have always before her Eyes, such a comfortable Pledge of her Safety. It was more prudent also, as *Arias Montanus* observes, to do it now, than when the *Israelites* came to besiege the Place; for that Novelty might have made the People of *Jericho* suspect some Correspondence.

Ver.

Ver. 22. *And they went and came unto the Mountain, and abode there three Days, until the Pursuers were returned.*] Being furnished, it is likely, with sufficient Provision by *Rahab*. Many think they staid there but one whole Day, and Part of other two, which, according to the Style of the Scripture, may be called three Days: But their only Reason for it is to make these three Days, and those mentioned in the first Chapter, *ver. 11.* to be the same; which is not probable.

And the Pursuers sought them throughout all the Way, &c.] Which led to the Fords of *Jordan*. This expresses their Diligence, though it wanted Success; and perhaps there were more Ways than one that led thither; in all which they placed themselves, or some other Persons, to watch for them.

Ver. 23. *So the two Men returned, and descended from the Mountain.*] From whence perhaps they could see when the Pursuers came back; or they had some Intelligence of their Return; or, as I said before, that they had Commission only to search for them three Days.

And passed over.] The River *Jordan*.

And came to Joshua the Son of Nun, and told him all Things that befel them.] Since they left him. This shews that *Joshua* sent them so privately, that it was unknown to the People, (as I expounded, *ver. 1.*) for they give him alone an Account of what had happened unto them. See *vi. 17.*

Ver. 24. *And they said unto Joshua, Truly the LORD hath delivered into our Hands all the Land; for even all the Inhabitants of the Country do faint because of us.*] This was Part of what they had learn'd from *Rahab*, *ver. 9, &c.* who had strengthened their Faith by her own.

C H A P. III.

Ver. 1. **A**ND *Joshua rose early in the Morning.*] The next Morning after he had commanded the Officers to warn the Host, to prepare for their Removal, *Chap. i. 10, 11.*

And they removed from Shittim.] Where they had lain now above two Months; for they came hither on the first Day of the *Eleventh* Month of the *Fortieth* Year after they came out of *Egypt*. See *Deut. i. 3.*

And came to Jordan, he and all the Children of Israel.] Which River, as *Josephus* tells us, was sixty *Stadia* from *Shittim*; but it is so uncertain what his *Stadia* or *Furlongs* were, that one can only guess how many of our Miles *Threescore* of them made. Most think about *Seven*.

And lodged there before they passed over.] The Hebrew Word *Jalinu* doth not necessarily signify that they lodged there only one Night, for it often denotes a longer Time of Abode; and therefore the Vulgar *Latin* translates it *morati sunt*, they staid there, *viz. three Days*, as it follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass after three Days, that the Officers went through the Host.*] In the End

of the three Days before-mentioned, *Chap. i. 10, 11.* he sent the same Officers there mentioned, to make a new Proclamation: for it seems to me the most reasonable to take all this Story in the Order wherein it is related, only supposing the Spies to have been sent before the first Proclamation made by the Officers (as I observed, *ii. 1.* the words may be translated.) And thus our great Primate of *Ireland* understands it: After *Joshua* was confirm'd in his Office, (*Chap. i. ver. 1, 2, &c.*) he sent out the Spies, and then commanding the People to provide themselves Victuals, he marched from *Shittim* to *Jordan*; and the third Day (after that Command to provide themselves Victuals) he gave a new Command to prepare themselves to pass over *Jordan* the next Day.

Ver. 3. *And they commanded the People.*] By Order from *Joshua*, and in his Name and Authority.

Saying, When ye see the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD your God, and the Priests the Levites bearing it.] "Hitherto, saith *Kimchi* upon this Place, "the *Levites* (that is, the "Children of *Kobath*) carried the Ark; but "now the Priests are appointed to that Office, "for the greater Sanctification or Honour of it, "and because of the Miracle which was to be "wrought before it. Our *Rabbins* say, that the "Priests carried it thus *three times*; now in this "Place, and when they compassed *Jericho*, and "when *Zadok* and *Abiathar* brought it back to "Jerusalem, when *David* fled from *Absalom*, "2 *Sam. xv. 29.*" Unto which he adds a *Fourth*, when it was brought into the Temple which *Solomon* built; for the *Levites* were not permitted to go into the Sanctuary, much less into the most Holy Place, into which it was carried by the Priests, 1 *Kings viii. 6.*

Then ye shall remove from your Place, and go after it.] By this it appears the Ark was carried in the Front of them; whereas usually it was ordered to be carried in the Middle of their Camps, as we read *Numb. ii. 17.* But at their first Removal from Mount *Sinai*, which was a Time extraordinary, it march'd before them for three Days, *Numb. x. 33.* and so it did now, (and at no other Time) when they were to enter into *Canaan*, for a special Reason also, as I shall observe on the next Verse.

Concerning the Phrase, *the Priests the Levites*, see *Deut. xvii. 9.*

Ver. 4. *Yet there shall be a Space between you and it, about two Thousand Cubits.*] This is a Demonstration that it was not usual for the Ark to go before the whole Army; for if it had, there would have been no need to instruct them at what Distance they should keep from it, which would have been constantly observed.

By Measure.] It is likely they measured the Distance by a Line, at which the People were at first set; and then walking in equal Paces with the Priests, kept at the same Distance, though perhaps not precisely; for they might chance to move a Pace or two faster, or take larger Paces; and therefore he saith *about two thousand Cubits*.

That ye may know the Way by which ye must go.] There was the very same Reason for the Ark's

Ark's going before them now, that there was when they came from Mount Sinai; for then it was to search out a Resting-place for them, i. e. to shew them where they should rest; and now it was to lead them in the Way they were to march, unto their long-expected Settlement in the Promised Land. If it had not been for this, it would have been carried in its usual Place; but the Pillar of the Cloud, which hitherto conducted them, having now left them, as R. Solomon observes, this supplied its Place, and went before them, as that had been wont to do.

For ye have not passed this Way heretofore.] They were to be led in an untrodden Path, which the Power of God (of whose Presence with them the Ark was the Symbol) made for them.

Ver. 5. *And Joshua said unto the People.]* The Night before they went over Jordan, as appears by the latter Part of the Verse; and perhaps he spake this himself, at the head of every one of their Tribes, it being of great Importance.

Sanctify yourselves.] Other Places tell us what was their usual Sanctification. See *Exod. xix. 10, 11. Numb. xi. 18.* But besides the Legal Purifications, one cannot but think that he intended they should dispose their Minds by holy Meditations and Prayer to God to receive his Benefits, and to be more sensible of them when they were bestowed on them:

For to-morrow the LORD will do Wonders among you.] Which he would have them be in a Condition to observe, and to lay to Heart; and in order thereunto, prepare themselves by serious Thoughts of God, and of his Providence, as well as by washing their Bodies, and abstaining from their Wives, which were a Part of the Sanctification here intended.

Ver. 6. *And Joshua spake unto the Priests.]* The next Morning:

Saying, Take up the Ark of the Covenant.] Upon their Shoulders, for so it was to be carried, *Numb. vii. 9.*

And pass over before the People.] This Precept had been unnecessary, if they had been wont to carry it before the People.

And they took up the Ark of the Covenant, and went before the People.] After Joshua had spoken what follows, *ver. 7, 8, &c.* But it is mentioned now, to shew the Readiness of the Priests, as well as of the People, to obey the Commands of Joshua; whom they look'd upon as a Prophet, as Moses was, who had Power to give extraordinary Orders from God. Such were these for the Priests to carry the Ark, and to march with it before the People, not in the midst of their Camps.

Ver. 7. *And the LORD said unto Joshua.]* By an audible Voice, I suppose, from the Sanctuary, near unto which he now was; the Priests being about to take out the Ark from thence, to carry it before the People.

This Day.] The tenth Day of the first Month, on which the Paschal Lamb was, by the Law, to be set apart to be offered four Days after, *Exod. xii. 3.*

Will I begin to magnify thee in the Sight of

all Israel.] By doing such Wonders before them all, as should convince them Joshua was appointed by God to be their supreme Governor, who should give them Possession of the Land of Canaan. See *iv. 14.*

That they may know, that as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.] See *i. 5.* From the Time of Moses to the Days of Saul, God declared, by some extraordinary Things, whom he would have to be the supreme Governor of his People, whose Authority he established by doing Wonders.

Ver. 8. *And thou shalt command the Priests that bear the Ark of the Covenant, saying.]* Every thing was done by his Order, that it might appear he was powerful with God, who wrought those Wonders at his Word.

When ye are come to the Brink of the Water of Jordan.] Jordan then overflowed beyond its Banks; therefore they were not to go to the Brink of the River, but of the Water.

Ye shall stand still in Jordan.] And there stop till the Waters above were suspended, and those below run away; and then they went and stood in the midst of the River, *ver. 17.*

Ver. 9. *And Joshua said unto the Children of Israel, Come hither.]* To the Sanctuary, I suppose, where he now was, *ver. 7.*

And hear the Words of the LORD your God.] Which Joshua reported to them from God, who was about to demonstrate himself to be the omnipotent, LORD of all Creatures, and in a peculiar Manner their God, in Covenant with them, and full of Kindness to them.

Ver. 10. *And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you.]* These are the Words of the LORD their God, who is called the living God, in Opposition to the Idols of the Heathen; who could do nothing, much less such Miracles as demonstrated the God of Israel to be the eternal LORD of Heaven and Earth, who giveth Life to all Things; and he is said to be among them (or in the midst of them) whom he takes into his Protection, to defend and preserve them from all Evil.

And that he will without fail drive out from before you.] Most certainly make good his Promise made to Abraham long ago, (*Gen. xv. 18, &c.*) because he lives for ever to perform his Word.

The Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgasites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites.] Here all the seven Nations are mentioned (as they are *Deut. vii. 1.*) though sometimes only six of them are mentioned, the Girgasites being omitted. See *Exod. iii. 17.*

Ver. 11. *Behold the Ark of the Covenant.]* So called, because in it were the two Tables of the Covenant between God and them. It is frequently called the Ark of the Testimony, *Exod. xl. 20, 21. Numb. iv. 5.* and here in this Book, *iv. 16.*

Of the LORD of the whole Earth passeth before you.] To take Possession of the Land of Canaan; which he gave them as LORD of the whole Earth, and as particularly engaged by his Covenant to bestow upon them. The Author of the Book *Cofri* understands this, as if

if the Ark of the Covenant was called the LORD of the whole Earth; because God was so present with it, that where the Ark was, there were Wonders wrought; which ceased in its Absence. *Pars IV. Sect. 3. D. Kimchi, and Jos. Albo* say the same; and I find *Andreas Masius* following this Fancy; because there is an Accent after the *Ark of the Covenant*, distinguishing those Words from what follows, which (say they) are therefore added by Apposition. But *Bonsfrerius* hath confuted this very judiciously; observing, that the Accent is not of that Nature; and therefore the LXX, the Chaldee, Vulgar Latin, Symmachus, Aquila, the Syriack and Arabick, translate it as we do, the *Ark of the Covenant of the LORD of the whole Earth*. See *Buxtorf de Arca*, Cap. I. And yet, I know not how it came to pass, some have been so bold as to alter our Translation in some printed Copies, which I have met withal; where these Words are thus translated, *the Ark of the Covenant, even the LORD of the whole Earth*.

Into Jordan.] By which Miracle they were confirmed in their Belief of his Promise, when they saw the Waters of Jordan flee before him.

Ver 12. *Now therefore take ye twelve Men out of the Tribes of Israel.*] To do what he should command them, iv. 2, &c.

Out of every Tribe a Man.] The Tribe of Levi was one of the XII, upon all Accounts but only in the dividing of the Land: *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* being but one, viz. the Tribe of *Joseph*.

Ver. 13. *And it shall come to pass, as soon as the Soles of the Feet of the Priests that bear the Ark of the LORD, the LORD of the whole Earth.*] Here the Ark of the Covenant is called the Ark of *Jehovah*, (not *Jehovah*) who is the LORD, or Governor or Ruler of the whole Earth: In which is comprehended the Sea, and the Rivers, and all Waters which he commandeth as he pleaseth.

Shall rest in the Waters of Jordan.] Dip their Feet in the Brim of the Waters as it is explained, ver. 15.

That the Waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the Waters that come down from above.] The Waters which now ran in one Stream, were divided over-against the Place where the Priests trod; so that the lower Part of them ran down the Channel towards the dead Sea; and those above not coming down to supply their Place, the Ground was left dry.

And they shall stand on an Heap.] Viz. The Waters above, towards the Head, or Springs of the River, were made to stand still, as if they were congealed; rising in an Heap, piled one upon another, but not running down at all.

Ver. 14. *And it came to pass when the People removed from their Tents to pass over Jordan, and the Priests bearing the Ark of the Covenant before the People.*] The Priests moved first, and then the People followed them, at such a Distance as *Joshua* had prescribed, ver. 3, 4.

Ver. 15. *And as they that bare the Ark of the Covenant were come into Jordan, and the Feet*

of the Priests that bare the Ark were dipped in the Brim of the Water.] Which had overflown, as it here follows, beyond the Bounds of the Channel.

For Jordan overfloweth all his Banks at the time of Harvest.] This is meant of Barley-Harvest; which began about the Passover, as many have observed; and particularly *Hermannus Conringius*, in his Book *De Initio anni Sabbatici*. See upon *Deut. xvi. 9*. And it appears by the next Chapter, iv. 19. that it was the first Month, or the Month *Abib* when the Passover was to be kept: and therefore must signify that Harvest. See also *1 Chron. vii. 15*. This was likewise a Time when the River was more likely to overflow than in Wheat-Harvest; because now the Snow began to melt, that was in the neighbouring Mountains; especially in *Lebanon*; at the Foot of which was the Fountain of *Jordan*. By which the River was always swollen at this Time and thereby the Miracle increased. Such Overflowing of other Rivers, greater than this, are observed by Authors, at certain Seasons; with which I shall not trouble the Reader.

Ver. 16. *And the waters which came down from above stood.*] Stopt and ran no farther; but were driven back unto those that were coming down.

And rose up upon an Heap] Instead of flowing down the Channel, were lifted up into the Air; and appeared like a Mountain, as the *Vulgar Latin* translates it.

Very far from the City Adam.] At a great Distance from a City then called *Adam*, which lay upon the River.

That is beside Zaretan.] The former was a small City, and therefore its Situation is described by a Place of greater Note, called *Zaretan*, which lay on one Side of it, in the Plain of *Jordan*, as we read *1 Kings vii. 46*.

And those that came down toward the Sea of the Plain, even the Salt-Sea, failed, and were cut off.] Those Waters of the River, which were below, towards the Salt-Sea, into which *Jordan* emptied itself, ran all thither, and so left the Channel perfectly dry, that the People might pass over, which they did, directly over-against *Jericho*.

And the People passed over right against Jericho.] Having that famous City in their View, from whence, perhaps, the People on the Walls might, with Amazement, see the *Israelites* walk through the River on dry Ground. It was a great Refreshment also to the *Israelites* after their March, to pitch their Tents in so goodly a Plain, as this before *Jericho*.

Ver. 17. *And the Priests that bare the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry Ground, in the midst of Jordan.*] In one and the same Place and Posture, with their Faces towards *Jericho*.

And all the Israelites passed over on dry Ground.] Keeping, I suppose, the same Distance, of Two Thousand Cubits from the Ark; for there was Room enough on either Side, to march by it, and not come near it.

Until all the People were passed clean over Jordan.] Which they could not do in a short Time,

Time, unless we suppose them to have marched all in a-breast, which is not likely. For there was a certain Place, called, ever after, by the Name of *Bethabara*, to preserve the Memory of their passing over there; which is mentioned, *John* i. 28. It made therefore the Faith and Constancy of the Priests very remarkable, who remained so long in the Middle of the River, 'till the whole Multitude were got over, without Fear of that great Mountain of Waters from above, coming tumbling down upon them.

They who look upon this Part of the Divine History as improbable, if not incredible, should consider what a Shame it is to have less Faith than the Heathens: Who, lest their Gods should be thought less powerful than the God of *Israel*, forged those Stories which the *Persians* tell of *Zoroaster's* passing over Rivers; and the *Greeks* of *Inachus* dried up by *Neptune*; and other such like; which *Huetius* hath collected in his *Quæstiones Alnetanæ*, Lib. II. Cap. XII. Numb. XV. Why then do they call in Question the Power of the true God; who either by himself, or by his Angels, could easily stop the Course of a River, which he himself made; and both made the Waters rise up in a Heap as high as he pleased; and also stand so reared up, in a firm Hardness, as if they had been congealed?

C H A P. IV.

Verse 1. **A**ND it came to pass, when all the People were clean passed over Jordan, that the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying.] It is likely he went to return Thanks unto God for so wonderful a Mercy; and then God spake to him what follows:

Ver. 2. Take you twelve Men out of the People, out of every Tribe a Man.] He bids him now call together the Twelve Men formerly chosen, iii. 12.

Ver. 3. And command you them.] I suppose Joshua had some of the Elders, or Heads of the Tribes, that joined with him in this Office.

Saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan.] Which continued perfectly dry for some Space after they were all gone over; that is, till the Priests removed from thence.

Out of the Place where the Priests Feet stood firm, twelve Stones.] Some understand this so precisely, as if they were to take them from under the very Soles of the Priest's Feet; which is not probable; but only near to the Place where they stood. For the Priests did not stir a Step from the Place where they first stood; and therefore none can tell how they should take these Stones from under their Feet, and place others in their Room, (ver. 9.) while they remained standing fixed in the same Place.

And ye shall carry them over with you.] In the Sight of all the People, to make the Miracle more known among them all.

And leave them in the Lodging-place, where you shall lodge this Night.] As a Monument of this miraculous Work of God; which remained ever after in *Gilgal*; the Place where they lodged that Night, ver. 19, 20.

Ver. 4. Then Joshua called the twelve Men whom he had prepared, &c.] Before they passed over Jordan, iii. 12.

Ver. 5. And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the Ark of the LORD God into the midst of Jordan.] This is a Divine Order to go back again into the River, to the very Place where the Priests stood with the Ark; by which these XII Men were dispensed withal, to come nearer to the Ark than the rest of the Congregation.

And take ye up every Man a Stone upon his Shoulder.] Great Stones as big as they could well lift, and carry. So the Hebrew Word imports, ver. 3.

According unto the number of the Tribes of the Children of Israel.] That they might publish in every Tribe this evident Testimony of the Power of God; which laid the Bottom of the River dry for so long a Time, that they not only all went over on dry Ground; but some of them returned again, and took up these Stones, and laid others in their Room, ver. 9.

Ver. 6. That this may be a Sign unto you.] A Token of what God had now done for them.

That when your Children ask their Fathers in Time to come, saying, What mean these Stones? It was natural for Men, in future Ages, seeing great Stones, (in a Place perhaps where there were no more) and just XII of them, laid together, or one upon another, to ask how they came there, and for what End they were brought thither, and by whom.

Ver. 7. Then shall they answer them, That the Waters of Jordan were cut off, before the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the Waters of Jordan were cut off.] This was to give them Occasion to report at large, what God had done for them at their Entrance into Canaan; that their Posterity might be affected with it, no less than themselves.

And these Stones shall be for a Memorial to the Children of Israel for ever.] To keep in Memory this Miracle in all Ages to come, as long as this Nation lasted. All People have been wont to erect Monuments of Stone to preserve the Memory of Covenants, or Victories, or other great Things. And though there was no Inscription upon these Stones, yet the Number of them; and the Place where they lay, which was not stony, was sufficient to signify some memorable Thing; which, upon Enquiry, would be made known to those that saw and observed them.

Ver. 8. And the Children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, &c.] That is, the twelve Men did according to his Order, both in taking up the Stones, and carrying them to the Place where they lodged.

And laid them down there.] Which, perhaps, were erected into a kind of Pillar, that they might look like a Monument of something done thereabout. Or, they were so placed, as to be so many little Monuments of God's Mercy, See Ver. 20.

Ver. 9. And Joshua set up twelve Stones in the midst of Jordan, in the Place where the Feet of the Priests that bare the Covenant, stood.] This renders it probable that the other XII Stones taken out of Jordan were set up in *Gilgal*, as these,

these, taken out of some of the Fields thereabouts, were erected in the midst of the River, to testify to all Posterity their miraculous Passage over it, at this Place.

And they are there unto this Day.] From hence, not only such Men as Mr. Hobbs, but Masius, and Grotius, and divers others, have argued, that this Book was not written by Joshua, but by some Person who lived at a great Distance from his Time, as these Words, they fancy, import. But this is a mere Fancy; for if Joshua wrote this Book in his old Age, or at least then added his last Hand to it, (as it is probable he did) he might as well use these Words, as one that lived an hundred Years after. And at this Rate of arguing, (as Huetius observes) Moses must not be the Author of the Book of Deuteronomy, where he speaks in the same Style, x. 5. xi. 4.) nor St. Matthew the Author of the Gospel, which he wrote not many Years after our Saviour's Death; who uses the very same Words, xxvii. 8. xxviii. 21. See *Demonstr. Evang. Propos. iv. Cap. xxiv.*

Ver. 10. *For the Priests that bare the Ark, stood in the midst of Jordan.]* It is remarkable in this whole Relation, that when the Priests are mentioned, these Words are still added, *that bare the Ark*, or, *the Ark of the Covenant*, (both in this Chapter, ver. 9, 16, 18. and in the foregoing ver. 13, 14, 15, 17.) to shew that this Miracle was not to be ascribed to them, but to the Power of the LORD, unto whom they ministered.

Until every thing was finished, that the LORD commanded Joshua to speak unto the People.] Concerning the taking up of the Twelve Stones, and placing others in their room; and all that preceded concerning their passing over the River; which it is likely he exhorted them to do cheerfully.

According to all that Moses commanded Joshua.] We do not read that Moses gave any particular Directions about the foregoing Matters; therefore the Meaning is, that Joshua strenuously executed all that God ordered, as Moses had admonished him, Deut. iii. 28. and other Places.

And the People hasted, and passed over.] This doth not refer to all the People, as if they went a swift Pace over the River, out of Fear of the Waters overwhelming them, (as some think) but to such as remained still behind the Ark, to attend its Motion. Who now seeing all that Joshua commanded was finished, made haste to get over the River, as their Brethren had done before them. It is said, indeed, ver. 1. that when all the People were clean passed over, Joshua gave Order about the Twelve Stones: But the Meaning is, when the main Body of the People were gone over: For it appears by the next Verse, that they had not all entirely passed over until now.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, that when all the People were clean passed over.]* So that none were remaining in the Plains of Moab, from whence they came.

That the Ark of the LORD passed over, and the Priests.] They who went first into the River, came last out: It being by the Power of the

LORD, whose Ark the Priests bare, that the Course of the River was stopped, and a Way made for all the People to pass over.

In the Presence of the People.] Who beheld the Water standing still on an Heap, while the Ark was in the River; but come tumbling down when it was gone. Which demonstrated that it was God's Presence with them, to which alone they owed this miraculous Mercy.

Ver. 12. *And the Children of Reuben, and the Children of Gad, and half the Tribe of Manasseh, passed over, armed, before the Children of Israel, as Moses spake unto them.]* They were the first that passed over, (according to their Engagement, Numb. xxxiii. 20, 21, 27, of which Joshua had put them in mind, i. 13.) ready to encounter any Enemy that might have opposed their Landing.

Ver. 13. *About forty thousand prepared for War.]* Or, *ready armed* (as it is in the Margin) and prepared to fight, in case they met with any Opposition. It is observable, that in the last Muster, made not long ago, of those that were fit for War in their several Tribes, there were above forty Thousand in the Tribe of Reuben alone; and above fifty Thousand in that of Manasseh, Numb. xxvi. 7, 34. And therefore it is likely Joshua pick'd out only this Number of chosen Men; and left all the rest to look after their Families and Flocks.

Passed over before the LORD unto Battle.] Being passed over the River, they stood in Battle Array before the Ark; at the Distance, I suppose, of two Thousand Cubits.

In the Plains of Jericho.] Where it might be supposed the People of Jericho would have encamped, to hinder their Passage.

Ver. 14. *On that Day the LORD magnified Joshua in the Sight of all Israel.]* As he promised, iii. 7.

And they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the Days of his Life.] This Wonder gained him the like Respect and Reverence, that the dividing the Red Sea did to Moses, Exod. xiv. 31.

Ver. 15. *And the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying.]* All this Business was managed purely by the Divine Direction,

Ver. 16. *Command the Priests that bear the Ark of the Testimony, that they come up out of Jordan.]* The midst of which River, where they stood, being the lowest and deepest Part of it, they are properly said to come up when they left that Station.

Ver. 17. *Joshua therefore commanded the Priests, saying, Come ye up out of Jordan.]* Where they waited for the Divine Order, and did not stir till they received it.

Ver. 18. *And it came to pass, when the Priests that bare the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD were come up out of the River Jordan, and the Soles of the Priests Feet were lift up unto the dry Land.]* Where the Waters of Jordan, when it overflowed farthest, were never wont to come.

That the Waters of Jordan returned into their Place.] The Channel was filled again by the Descent of the Waters. Which for some time had stood heaped up, and could not stir; but now were let loose to keep their ancient Course.

And

And overflowed all his Banks, as they did before.] Which was done, it is likely, by a gradual Descent of the Water, and not by the tumbling down of that great Heap all at once.

Ver. 19. *And the People came out of Jordan on the tenth Day of the first Month.]* In which Month they came out of Egypt, upon the fifteenth Day of it: So that there wanted just five Days of forty Years since their coming from thence.

And encamped in Gilgal.] A Place very famous in After-times, because of their first Encampment here; where they seem to have continued for several Years, during the Wars of Canaan. Here also they were circumcised, (from whence the Place had its Name, ver. 9.) and kept the first Passover; the Tabernacle and the Ark remaining here, as long as the Israelites kept their Station in this Place. See ix. 6. x. 6, 43. xiv. 6. which was, I suppose, till the War was ended, and they had also begun to divide the Land. See xiv. 6. After which the Tabernacle was fixed in Shiloh, xviii. 1. xxii. 9, 12. Though still Gilgal continued a famous Place, as appears from Judges ii. 1. 1 Sam. xi. 14, 15. xiii. 4, &c.

In the East Border of Jericho.] That is, between Jordan, which lay behind them, and Jericho, which lay before them.

Ver. 20. *And those Twelve Stones which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal.]* We are not told in what Form they were pitched; whether they remained single and distinct, or, as Josephus will have it, joined together in the Form of an Altar. It seems to agree best with the End and Intention of them, if we conceive them to have been set down single, but in some Order, (suppose three in a Row) representing, like so many little Pillars, the Twelve Tribes of Israel; who passing over Jordan on dry Ground, a Man out of each Tribe was ordered to bring a Stone, and place them here, for a perpetual Memorial (ver. 7.) of what God had done for them. For Stones, every one knows, (especially some Sorts of them) are of a very durable Nature, and therefore used by all Nations in the Monuments they have made to preserve the Memory of Persons and Things. Inasmuch, that if it be true which Procopius reports (in his second Book *de Bello Vandalico*) concerning the two Pillars erected by the Canaanites, who fled into Africa before the Face of Joshua, with an Inscription signifying their Expulsion by him; I conclude it to have been done in Imitation of these Stones, whereby Joshua preserved the Memory of the miraculous Way which was opened to him, for their Expulsion.

Ver. 21. *And he spake unto the Children of Israel, saying, When your Children shall ask their Fathers in Time to come, saying, What mean these Stones?] See ver. 6. where he had said this, at the Time they took up the Stones; and now repeats it, when they pitched them. For then he may be thought to have spoken only to the XII Men; but now to all the XII Tribes.*

Ver. 22. *And ye shall let your Children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry Land.]*

That it might not be left to every Man's Liberty to give what Answer they pleased to their Children, when they enquired the Meaning of these Stones, he sets down the very Words they should speak unto them; that they might be sure to be duly instructed in the wonderful Mercy of God to their Nation.

Ver. 23. *For the LORD your God dried up the Waters of Jordan from before ye, until ye were passed over.]* He would have Posterity made sensible, it was a Divine Benefit bestowed on them, by the Divine Power: Which alone could stop the Course of a River, till a whole Nation passed over on dry Ground.

As the LORD your God did to the Red-sea] At the same Time he would have them take Occasion to remember them of another miraculous Mercy, like unto this, though superior to it. Which the Prophets, in After-times, delighted to commemorate together, as appears from Psal. cxiv. 5.

Which he dried up before us, untill we were gone over.] What he did for their Fore-fathers, he did for them, who reaped the happy Fruit of it just as the saving of Noah and his Family in the Ark, was the saving of all Mankind, who sprang from them.

Ver. 24. *That all the People of the Earth might know the Hand of the LORD.]* All Nations round about, who heard of this, might be made sensible of the Power of the God of Israel.

That it is mighty.] Which can do all Things.

And that ye might fear the LORD your God for ever.] The People of Israel, especially, (for whom these Wonders were wrought) might religiously worship and serve him: For so the Fear of God frequently signifies in Scripture: And therefore the LXX here translate these Words *ἵνα ὑμεῖς σέβηθε Κύριον τὸν Θεὸν ὑμῶν, that ye may worship the LORD your God;* which includes in it all the Duty owing to him. And so they translate the last Words *for ever, ἐν παντί ἔργω, every thing that you do.*

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, when all the Kings of the Amorites.]* These were the principal Inhabitants, and the most valiant in all the Country; as hath been formerly noted.

Which were on the Side of Jordan Westward.] This seems to be added, to shew that besides the two Kings of the Amorites, Sibon, and Og, whom they had already subdued on the other Side of Jordan, Eastward; there were other Kings of the same Nation on that Side of Jordan, where the Israelites now were. And it is not improbable, that these Kings commanded the Hittites, Iivites, and Jebusites, as well as the Amorites.

And all the Kings of the Canaanites, which were by the Sea.] i. e. the Mediterranean, where the People properly called Canaanites, dwelt; though there were Colonies of them spread in other Places. The LXX here call them βασιλεῖς τῶν Φοινίκων, the Kings of Phœnicia: For upon

upon that Sea were the principal Cities of the ancient *Phœnicians*, viz. *Tyre* and *Sidon*. But though the People that lived upon the Sea-coast were peculiarly called by this Name of *Phœnicians*, yet they were so powerful, that the whole Country was called *χώρα τῶν Φοινίκων*, the Country of the *Phœnicians*; as the LXX call the Land of *Canaan*, ver. 12. of this Chapter.

Heard that the LORD had dried up the Waters of Jordan from before the Children of Israel, until we were passed over.] This sounds like the Language of *Joshua*, or of some other Person then present, when this Wonder was wrought; which astonished those that lived in the remotest Parts of the Country; who little thought of an Invasion on that Side, (which, it is likely, made them not draw any Forces that Way) imagining the River, especially when it overflowed all its Banks, was a sufficient Security unto them on that Frontier.

That their Hearts melted, neither was there Spirit in them any more, because of the Children of Israel.] They quite lost their Courage; which began to fail them before, as we read, Chap. ii. ver. 11. Or, as the LXX expounded it, *their Understanding failed them*; and they were in such a Consternation, that none knew what to advise for their Safety. In which the Providence of God is much to be observed, that by this means the *Israelites* were securely circumcised (as it here follows) whereas if the People of *Canaan* had been courageous and watchful, they had taken them at a great Advantage, if they had then fallen upon them; as appears by the Story of the *Shechemites*, Gen. xxxiv. 25. They had Leisure also, without any Disturbance, to celebrate the *Passover*, ver. 10.

Ver. 2. *At that Time the LORD said unto Joshua.*] The next Day, which was the *Eleventh* Day of the *first* Month; as our *Primate Usher* and others judge most likely.

Make thee sharp Knives.] Or, as it is in the Margin of our Bibles, *Knives of Flints*: Which Stones were plentiful, it is likely, in the Mountains thereabouts. And after they had marched forty Years in the Wilderness, it is probable (as *Theodoret* notes) that they were not provided with such Knives as we use, of Iron. By the very Words also of *Joshua*, it appears, he speaks of Knives they were now to provide; and not of such as they had already. Nor is it strange such Knives should be used, for they were common in the Eastern Countries, as may be gathered out of the *Talmud*, in the Treatise of the *Sabbath*; where they say, *in the killing of Beasts, they use either a Flint-stone* (so they interpret the Word *Tzur*) *or Glass, or a Quill*. From whence *Theodoric Hackspan* concludes, that if sharp Stones sufficed for the killing of Beasts, there was no need of any other in Circumcision. Who observes also, that the *Jews* say, they might circumcise with any Instrument, made either of Stone or Glass, but not of a Quill; because there was Danger, it might slit and hurt so tender a Part. And at this Day they do circumcise in the East, with Knives made of Stones, such as *Zipporah*, it is supposed, used in the Circumcision of her Son,

Exod. iv. 25. See this Question debated in *Sixtinus Amama*, his *Antibarbarus*, Lib. 2. Pag. 282. *Justin Martyr* thinks there was some Mystery in the Use of these Knives. See his Dialogue with *Trypho*, p. 341, 342.

And circumcise again the Children of Israel the second time.] This doth not signify that they who had been circumcised heretofore, were to be now circumcised again, (from whence some have drawn an Argument for the repeating of Baptism, as *St Austin* tells us) but that there had been such a general Circumcision heretofore ordered, as there was to be now after a long Omission of that Rite. And it is probable that it was at Mount *Sinai*, in the first Month of the second Year after they came out of *Egypt*. When they kept a *Passover* on the fourteenth Day of that Month, (*Numb. ix. 1, 2, 3.*) and before they kept it, circumcised all that had not been circumcised in *Egypt*, or since they came out of it. For no uncircumcised Person, nor any one who had a Son, or a Man-Servant in his House uncircumcised, was capable to be admitted to it. We do not read indeed of the Neglect of Circumcision in *Egypt*, or in that Year wherein they came out of it; but, considering the great Oppression they lay under in that Country, and the several Distresses they were in, after their Deliverance, for three Months, till they came to *Sinai*; and the Absence of *Moses* a long Time, after they came thither, it is very probable this Rite was omitted, till God called upon them (as he did now) to celebrate the *Passover*; and then they were constrained to take Care of it, because otherwise they could not have kept it. See *Selden*, Lib. 2. de *Synedr.* Cap. II. N. 1.

Ver. 3. *And Joshua made him sharp Knives, and circumcised the Children of Israel.*] Ordered every one that wanted it to be circumcised; and, it is probable, not only all those that came over *Jordan*, but such of the *Reubenites*, *Gadites*, and *Manassites*, as were left on the other Side, were circumcised also, and all in one Day, that they might be in a Condition to eat the *Passover*: Nor need it seem strange that it was dispatched in such a short time, for they might employ as many Hands as they pleased in this Work, there being no Necessity that a Priest or Levite should do it, but it might be performed by their Fathers or Mothers, or any other Person.

At the Hill of the Fore-skins.] In the *Hebrew*, at *Gibeab Naaraboth*; which some take to be the Name of the Place where they were circumcised; but then that Place was so called from the Fore-skins that were there thrown; which were so many, that being laid upon an Heap and covered with Earth, they made a little Hillock, as the *Jews* conceive. See *Pirke Elieser*, Cap. xxix.

Ver. 4. *And this is the Cause why Joshua did circumcise.*] The Reason of this Order, and of the Execution of it, is here given.

All the People that came out of Egypt, that were Males, even all the Men of War, died in the Wilderness, by the Way, after they came out of Egypt.] That is, all that were then twenty Years

Years old, for such only were reputed Men of War, and were guilty of the Sedition mentioned in *Numb. xiv.* for which they were doomed to perish in the Wilderness.

Ver. 5. *Now all the People that came out were circumcised.*] Not only those that died for their Rebellion, but all the rest under twenty Years old, were generally circumcised, except some Infants, who (as I said upon *ver. 2*) might have been neglected during their heavy Oppression there.

But all the People that were born in the Wilderness by the Way, 'as they came forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised.] Never since they removed from Mount Sinai, where it is likely there was a general Circumcision, as there was now to be before their celebrating the Passover, which had not been kept since that Time.

Ver. 6. *For the Children of Israel walked forty Years in the Wilderness, till all the People that were Men of War, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, &c.*] These Words seem to give the Reason why they were not circumcised, because they were in a wandering Condition, while they remained in the Wilderness, and did not know when the Cloud would remove from the Tabernacle to lead them to another Place; which if it had done, when Children were newly circumcised, their Lives might have been endangered by Motion, while they were fore. This, a great many think, made Moses dispense with Circumcision by God's Direction. We do not find him indeed consulting God about it; but he was satisfied that God approved of this Reason for the Omission of it. R. Jose, as Mr. Selden observes, gives this Account of the whole Business: *The Israelites kept but one Passover all the time they were in the Wilderness; the Reason was, in that Year (which was the next to that wherein they came out of Egypt) their Tents were pitched in a place where they might safely circumcise the Males that had been lately born, lest the Neglect of it should hinder the legitimate Eating of the Passover. But in all the Time following, wherein they wandered in the Desert, they did not circumcise their Children, because of their incommodious Journeys, and the Danger of Circumcision by the way; so that they could keep no more Passovers till they came to Canaan.* This is a far better Reason than what many of them give, who say, Circumcision was omitted, because the North Wind never blew all the Time they were in the Wilderness; and Wounds are very dangerous when it doth not blow. Whence their Medical Maxim mentioned in the *Talmud*; *In cloudy Days, and when the East Wind blows, we neither circumcise nor open a Vein.* See Buxtorf. *Synagog. Judaica*, Cap. IV. But If this Matter be well considered, we cannot rest satisfied with the foregoing Reason; for all the Time they were in the Wilderness, Children were born, and Women lay in; and there was greater Danger by their Motion, while they were in Labour, and when they were newly brought to Bed, than there was in their Childrens being circumcised, who were fore but for a few Days; whereas the other were not fit to go abroad, or to travel, in a great many.

For which, and for several other Reasons, *Fortunatus Scacchus* thinks this was not the Cause why they were not circumcised during their Travels in the Wilderness; but the true Reason was, that they did not look upon the Precept of Circumcision as obliging them, till they came to settle in the Land of Canaan: For in the Covenant which Moses made with them at Mount Sinai, there is nothing said about Circumcision, unto which they were bound by the Covenant made with Abraham (as our Saviour observes, *John vii. 21.*) and that runs thus, *I will give unto thee, and unto thy Seed after thee, the Land wherein thou art a Stranger, &c. Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou, and thy Seed after thee, &c. Every Man-Child shall be circumcised*, Gen. xvii. 8, 9, 10. See *Sacror. Elaochrism. Myrother. 2. Cap. liv.*

Ver. 7. *And their Children, whom he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised.*] Now that they were come to their Rest in the Land of Promise.

For they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the Way.] For the Reason above-mentioned: To which this may be added, that several great Men (such as Theodoret and St. Hierom among the Ancients) think that Circumcision, being a Note of Distinction between the Israelites and other People, there was no need of it in the Wilderness, when (as Cedrenus speaks) they were παντός ἀλλογένης κεχωρισμένοι, separated from all Strangers, by the Wilderness itself. Others think that the mixed Multitude of Egyptians, who, moved by the Miracles they had seen done in their Country, went out of it with the Israelites, and joined themselves to them, were the Cause of this Omission; for they could not presently incorporate with them by receiving Circumcision; and therefore it was suspended, that these Egyptians might not look upon themselves as quite a different People: But longer than till they came to Canaan they would not have it discontinued, when all, Egyptians as well as Israelites, received it, that they might not be upbraided as a People of a different Original. And as the Omission of it in the Desert made the Profelytes who came out of Egypt equal with the Israelites, while they stayed there; so, as a most learned Friend of mine (Dr. Alix) suggests to me, it shewed, that there was no absolute Necessity of this Rite, and that it could not be of eternal Obligation.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the People, that they abode in their Place in the Camp.*] Lay still without Motion (which would have hindered the Healing of the Sore) and had not the least Disturbance given them by the People of Canaan.

Till they were whole.] Which they were against the Passover: for reckoning the eleventh Day for one, there were four Days between their Circumcision and the Passover, which was not kept till the 14th Day at Even, when the Pain was pretty well over, for it was faintest on the third Day. See upon Gen. xxxiv 25.

Ver. 9. *And the LORD said unto Joshua, This Day have I rolled away the Reproach of Egypt from off you.*] It is commonly thought that by
the

the Reproach of Egypt, is meant nothing else but Uncircumcision, with which the *Israelites* always reproached other People, particularly the *Egyptians*, among whom they had long dwelt, and with whom they were best acquainted. But our learned Dr. *Spencer* thinks *the Reproach of Egypt*, is the Slavery to which they had been there long subject, but now were fully declared a free People by receiving the Mark of the Seed of *Abraham*, and made Heirs of the Promised Land. This he very often repeats, *Lib. 1. de Leg. Hebr. Ritual. Cap. IV. p. 44, 51, 55.* And no doubt *Joshua* now chose, immediately upon their Entrance into the Land of *Canaan*, to cause them to be circumcised, not only as a Token they peculiarly belong'd to him, but to oblige them to be careful to observe all the Laws of God, many of which could not, and others were not, observed in the Wilderness, but were now to be regularly practised, because they held the Land of *Canaan* by this Tenure. To this Purpose also *Theodoret* discourses, in his Questions upon this Book; They were made now Lords of the Promised Land, who were lately Slaves in *Egypt*; for they could not be the legitimate Children of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and Heirs of the Promises made to them, till they were circumcised. *Rabbi* hath another Notion of it; That the *Egyptians* seeing the *Israelites* wander so long as they did in the Wilderness, reproached and flouted them, as if they were brought thither to be destroyed, and not to possess the Land of *Canaan*; from which Reproaches God now delivered them, when he assured them, by enjoining their Circumcision, that they should shortly enjoy that Country which God promised; but which no uncircumcised Person might inherit: But the first is the plainest and most unconstrained Sense.

Wherefore the Name of the Place is called Gilgal unto this Day.] This was the first Original of the Name, which this Place had ever after; for *Galal* in *Hebrew*, from whence this Word comes, signifies to remove, take away, or devolve. And so here the *LXX.* translate the Word *Gallotbi* (*I have rolled away*) by ἀφεῖλον, and the Vulgar Latin by *Abstuli* (*I have taken away*;) which makes it strange that *Josephus* should say, (*Lib. V. Antiq. Cap. I.*) that this Word *Gilgal* signifies *Liberty*, whom *Theodoret* follows; as if this Place was so called, because now they found themselves perfectly freed from the *Egyptians*, and from all the Troubles they endured in the Wilderness.

Unto this Day.] These Words are alledged by some against *Joshua's* being the Author of this Book; to which an Answer hath been given, *iv. 9.*

Ver. 10. And the Children of Israel encamped in Gilgal.] Continued their Camp there, as they were enjoined, *ver. 8.*

And kept the Passover.] Which was the second Passover that had been kept since its first Institution, the first being observed the second Year after their coming out of *Egypt* at Mount *Sinai*; after which it had been omitted thirty-nine Years, because many of the People were uncircumcised.

VOL. II.

On the fourteenth Day of the Month at Even.] According to the Command of God, *Exod. xii. 6.*

In the Plains of Jericho.] Where the Tabernacle was in the midst of their Camp, unto which they brought their Lamb, for it could be sacrificed no where else, *Deut. xvi. 2.* And therefore hither the *Reubenites* and *Gadites* and *Manassites*, on the other side *Jordan*, came to offer this Sacrifice; which was easier for them, than it was in After-times to go up to *Jerusalem*.

Ver. 11. And they did eat the old Corn of the Land.] Which the People of the Country had left in their Barns when they fled into *Jericho*, and other strong Holds.

The Morrow after the Passover.] There is a great Dispute among the *Jews*, whether this were the *Fifteenth* Day of the Month, which was properly the next Day after the Passover, or, as others take it, the *Sixteenth* Day, which was the solemn Sabbath kept on the first Day of Unleavened Bread, (*Levit. xxiii. 10, 11.*) when they were to wave the Sheaf of the First Fruits before the LORD. The former are in the right.

Unleavened Cakes.] That is, they kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which was distinct from the Passover, as I observed, *Exod. xii. 15, &c.*

And parched Corn on the self-same Day.] This was new Corn, which was growing that Year they entered into *Canaan*, of which it was not lawful to eat, till they had offered the Sheaf before-mentioned, (*Levit. xxiii. 14.*) and therefore it is made an Argument by some, that it was the *Sixteenth* Day of this Month when this Corn was parched.

Ver. 12. And the Manna ceased on the Morrow after they had eaten of the old Corn of the Land, neither had the Children of Israel Manna any more.] Because they had no need of it, (as *Kimchi* and others interpret it) being supplied by the Store of old Corn which they found in the Land of *Canaan*, and by what was growing upon the Ground.

But they did eat of the Fruit of the Land of Canaan that Year.] After they had offered the Sheaf before-mentioned, *Levit. xxiii. 11.* So that Manna ceased on the *Sixteenth* or *Seventeenth* Day of the first Month, having continued with them forty Years, wanting about a Month. So *R. Bechai* truly interprets these Words, *Exod. xvi. 35.* not to signify *Forty Years* compleat, but *near Forty Years*; for it began to fall on the *Fifteenth* Day of the second Month, and ceased on the *Sixteenth* or *Seventeenth* Day of the first Month of the *Fortieth* Year after they came out of *Egypt*; and therefore, to shew that they were not to expound those Words, *They did eat Manna Forty Years*, in a strict and precise Sense, *Moses* immediately adds, *until they came to a Land inhabited; they did eat Manna until they came to the Borders of the Land of Canaan*; which was exactly fulfilled, *Gilgal* being on the *Borders of the Land*, where it now ceased; but it continued till that Time, tho' they came to a Land inhabited, when they conquered the Kingdoms of *Sibon* and *Og*.

C

Ver.

Ver. 13. *And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho.*] After he had performed these solemn Rites of Circumcision and the Passover, Joshua went to take a View of Jericho, and to observe, as Generals are wont to do, the Approaches to it.

That he lift up his Eyes and looked.] These Words signify a sudden Apparition of a Person to him; for so this Phrase is used, when something new and unexpected presents itself, as one is intent upon something else, *Gen. xviii. 1. Dan. x. 5.*

And behold there stood a Man before him.] Whom he took to be a Man.

With his Sword drawn in his Hand over-against him.] He seemed to be a Soldier, or rather a great Commander, and stood directly opposite to him.

And Joshua went unto him.] Such was his undaunted Courage, with which God had inspired him.

And said unto him, art thou for us, or for our Adversaries?] He demands of him, whether he came to help the Israelites, or the People of Canaan; for whom (it appears by the Answer) Joshua suspected he came to fight.

Ver. 14. *And he said, Nay.*] *i. e.* I am not on the Side of your Adversaries.

But as Captain (or Prince) of the Host of the LORD am I now come.] By the Host of the LORD, is here meant the whole Body of the People of Israel, whom the LORD himself led forth out of Egypt, as his Army, (see *Exod. xii. 41.*) and now appeared in this manner, that he might shew he would still conduct them, as their chief Commander and Leader, by whom they should be victorious over their Enemies: For tho' many take this to have been a created Angel (*Michael*, suppose, the Chief of them) yet it is evident that Joshua did not think him so to be, for he fell down and worshipped him, as we read in the Words following.

And Joshua fell on his Face to the Earth.] With the profoundest Reverence.

And did worship.] Which he durst not have given (for God alone is to be adored) nor would an Angel have received, without such a Check as an Angel gave *St. John*, (*Revel. xxii. 10.*) if he had not taken him to be the Divine WORD that was come to fight for them. So the Chaldee Paraphrase upon *Josb. x. 42.* *It was the WORD of the LORD that fought for them*, according to God's Promise, *i. 9, 17.* This a most learned Friend of mine (*Dr. Alix*) shews was the Judgment of the ancient Jewish Church (see his late Book on that Argument, p. 234.) and it is most certain was the Judgment of the ancient Christians, particularly of *Justin Martyr*, *Eusebius*, and *Theodoret*. See *Valesius* in his Annotations upon *Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History, Lib. 1. Cap. 2. p. 7.* And therefore our great Primate of Ireland fears not to say in his Annals, *Jesus Dominus noster, princeps militiæ patris sui, Jesu typico ad Jerichuntem gladio stricto apparens, promittit se populum defensurum*; that is, Jesus our LORD, the Prince of his Father's Host, appearing to him who was a Type of him at Jericho, with a drawn Sword, promised to be the Defender of the People: Where

he seems by the Captain of the LORD's Host, to understand our LORD, who commands Angels themselves; for they are sometimes called the Host of Heaven, *1 Kings xxii. 19. Luke ii. 13.* And it may very well be thought the Meaning here.

And said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his Servant?] Joshua was possessed with such a deep Sense of the Greatness of this Person, that he humbly desires to receive his Commands, and he would obey them.

Ver. 15. *And the Captain of the LORD's Host said unto Joshua, Loose thy Shoe from off thy Foot, for the Place where thou standest is holy.*] This is the fullest Evidence that can be given of the Divinity of this Person that appeared to him; who was so far from reproving him for doing him too much Honour, that he commanded him to do much more; for that which he here requires, is the highest Acknowledgment of a Divine Presence that was used among the Eastern Nations, as the same *Dr. Alix* observes, and considering that these are the very same Words which were spoken to *Moses*, *Exod. iii. 2, 3.* we learn the Reason why God commanded this to Joshua; which was, for the strengthening of his Faith, that as now he was placed in *Moses* his stead, so God would be with him, as he had been with *Moses*. And thus *Joh. à Coch* discourses very reasonably upon the Gemara of the Sanhedrin, Cap. 6. N. 3. *This Angel, who suffered himself to be worshipped, and by whose Presence the Place where he appeared was sanctified, so that Joshua was commanded to put off his Shoes, no doubt was he whom all the Angels in Heaven worship.*

And Joshua did so.] Put off his Shoes, in Token of Reverence to that Place; which was holy, while that Divine Presence remained there, tho' not after it was gone: And it continued there for some Space of Time, to give Joshua Advice, and to encourage him to hope for his Protection and Assistance; as appears from v. 2. of the next Chapter.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. **N**OW Jericho was straitly shut up, because of the Children of Israel.] The Targum understands it as if he spake of the strong Fortifications of Jericho, which made it needful Joshua should be encouraged in his Enterprize against it. But the Words in the Hebrew are literally (as is noted in the Margin of our Bibles) *did shut up, and was shut up*, which plainly relates to the strict Guards which were kept, that none could get into the City, nor get out of it: So it is explained in the next Words.

None went out, and none came in.] They shut up their Gates so close, that none could go out to carry Intelligence to Joshua; and they were blocked up so close by the Israelites (to which the latter Part of the foregoing Words may perhaps refer) that none could get in to bring any Intelligence or Relief to the Inhabitants of Jericho.

Ver.

Ver. 2. *And the LORD said unto Joshua.]* The same Person speaks to him (all agree) who is called the *Prince of the LORD's Host* in the foregoing Chapter; and here is called JEHOVAH. Which shews he was not a created Angel, but God himself; who alone could promise and perform what follows.

See, I have given into thy Hand Jericho, and the King thereof, and the mighty Men of Valour.] Who were gathered together in this Place out of several Nations: It being a Frontier City, which they made as strong as they were able, and defended by the most valiant Men they had in the Country. See xxiv. 11. For we are to suppose that they had refused the Offers of Peace which God ordered to be first sent unto them, (Deut. xx. 10.) and, trusting to their Forces, took up a desperate Resolution not to yield upon any Terms.

Ver. 3. *And ye shall compass the City, all ye Men of War, and go round the City once.]* At such a Distance, I suppose, that they could not reach them from the City, with their Arrows or Stones flung against them.

Thus shall ye do six Days.] Once every of those Days, in such Order as is described, ver. 6, 7, 8, 9. This look'd not like making War; but appeared to the Besieged, it was probable, as a Pastime.

Ver. 4. *And seven Priests shall bear before the Ark seven Trumpets of Rams Horns.]* Such Trumpets as they used to blow withal in the Year of Jubilee, Lev. xxv. 9. for so the Phrase is in the Hebrew, *Trumpets of Jubel*: And I have observed elsewhere, that Rams Horns, not being hollow, Trumpets could not be made of them.

And the seventh Day ye shall compass the City seven times.] The seventh Day's March differed in two Things from the other six; that they compassed it but once on other Days, and made not the least Noise, but now seven times, and made a great Shout at the End of the last Circuit. Concerning this Number Seven, see Drusius upon this Place, and upon Levit. iv. 6. Grotius saith of it in short (upon 2 Chron. xxix. 21.) *Heptas sacris propria*; The Number Seven is proper to sacred Things: As appears by the seven Angels and seven Trumpets, Revel. viii. 2.

And the Priests shall blow with the Trumpets.] All the time they marched so often round the City. See Tertullian, Lib. 2. adv. Marcion Cap. 21.

Ver. 5. *And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long Blast with the Rams Horns.]* A loud Sound protracted after a rustick manner, as Bochart interprets it in his *Hieroicoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 43.

And when ye hear the Sound of the Trumpet.] And were commanded by Joshua to shout, ver. 16.

All the People shall shout with a great Shout.] Such as Soldiers use when they make an Onset upon a Place, or when Armies meet to give Battle.

And the Wall of the City shall fall down flat.] Or, fall under it as it is in the Hebrew; which seems to signify that the Foundations of the

Wall were subverted, so that it sunk and fell into the Ditch, or (as the Jews explain it) sunk into the very Ground on which it stood, so as to leave no Ruins, as in the common Fall of Walls; in which they suppose another Miracle.

And the People shall ascend up every Man strait before him.] The whole Wall did not fall down, for Rahab's House stood, which was upon the Wall, ii. 15. But such wide Breaches were made every where round about, that the Israelites went strait forward, and found an easy Entrance into this City, which the amazed Inhabitants had no Heart to defend; or rather, the whole Wall sunk into the Earth, only Rahab's House was left standing, which made the Thing more remarkable. And thus God demonstrated, that it was his wonderful Power which overthrew the City, against which they brought no Engines nor battering Rams, &c. ἀλλὰ μόνη φωνὴ σάλπιγγος κεραιῶν, καὶ εὐχὴ δικαίη &c. as Epiphanius speaks, Hæres. 66. N. 83.

Ver. 6. *And Joshua the Son of Nun called the Priests, and said unto them, Take up the Ark of the Covenant.]* This is the second Time that the Priests are ordered to carry the Ark, which belonged to the Office of the Robabites. See iii. 3.

And let seven Priests bear seven Trumpets of Rams Horns before the Ark of the LORD.] As the LORD commanded, ver. 4.

Ver. 7. *And he said unto the People, Pass on and compass the City, and let him that is armed pass before the Ark of the LORD.]* This explains, ver. 3. where he seems to command only the Men of War to compass the City. But the Meaning is, that the whole Body of the People should march in this Circuit, the Men of War going before the Ark, and the rest of the People following it, as it is explained ver. 9.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the People.]* By the Priests, as the LXX understand it.

That the seven Priests bearing the seven Trumpets of Rams Horns, passed on before the LORD, and blew with the Trumpets, and the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD followed them.] According to the Direction given ver. 6.

Ver. 9. *And the armed Men went before the Priests, that blew with the Trumpets.]* Here the Order of their March explains the Command, ver. 7.

And the Rear-ward came after the Ark.] That is, the rest of the People who had no Arms, old Men, Women and Children, came in the Rear of the Ark. Concerning the Word *Measseph*, (which we translate *Rear-ward*) see Numb. x. 23. From whence may be gathered, that by this *Rear-ward*, is meant the Tribe of Dan; as the Targum, Rasi and Kimchi understand it; who by the armed Men before mentioned, understand the Reubenites, Gadites and Manassites, who were engaged by Moses to go armed before the LORD to War, Numb. xxxii. 20. and renewed this Engagement to Joshua, i. 12, &c.

The Priests going on, and blowing with the Trumpets.] The Word *Priests* is not in the Hebrew,

brew, which made the *Vulgar* to translate the Words in such a manner as if the whole Multitude before mentioned made a Sound with Trumpets, *Buccinis omnia concrepabant*. But there being no Order for any to blow with Trumpets but only the *Priests*, our Translators have done well to supply that Word from *Ver. 4.* as they do also from *Ver. 13.* where this is again repeated.

Ver. 10. And Joshua had commanded the People, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any Noise with your Voice, neither shall any Word proceed out of your Mouth.] They were not to talk to one another as they went along, but march in a profound Silence, before and after the LORD, waiting on him, to see what he would do for them.

Until the Day I bid ye shout, then shall ye shout.] That is, on the seventh Day, after they had compassed the City seven times.

Ver. 11. So the Ark of the LORD compassed the City, going about it once.] It is uncertain upon what Day they began to do this; but it is very probable (as the *Jews* say in their *Larger Chronicle*) that it was the next Day after the seven Days of Unleavened Bread were ended.

And they came into the Camp, and lodged in the Camp.] They spent the rest of the Day in the Camp to refresh themselves, and lay there the following Night.

Ver. 12. And Joshua rose up early in the Morning.] Viz. That Morning of the first Day of compassing the City.

And the Priests took up the Ark of the LORD.] These Words, and those that follow in the next Verse, give a particular Account of what was done the first Day, according to that which was said in general, *Ver. 8, 9.*

Ver. 13. And the seven Priests bearing seven Trumpets of Rams Horns before the Ark of the LORD, went on continually.] Without resting or making any Stop, in a continued Motion, till they had finished their Circuit.

And blew with the Trumpets.] As soon as they began their Motion.

And the armed Men went before them, but the Rear-ward came after the Ark, the Priests going on, and blowing with the Trumpet.] Till they have ended their Circuit.

Ver. 14. And the second Day they compassed the City once.] In the same Order before described.

And returned into the Camp.] As they had done the first Day, *Ver. 11.*

And so they did six Days.] The remaining four Days were spent in the same pompous Shew, without striking a Stroke, or speaking a Word, that the Subversion of the City might be ascribed wholly to the Power of God, which secretly undermined the Walls, and threw them down.

Ver. 15. And it came to pass on the seventh Day.] The *Jewish* Writers say this was the Sabbath, as *Raymundus* observes in his *Pugio Fidei*, and *Jos. de Voysin* in his Annotations upon him, p. 625. But I shall only mention the Words of *Kimchi*, which are these; *The Ark of the LORD compassed the City the first Time,*

on the first Day of the Week: So our Doctors, of pious Memory, have delivered, that the seventh Day whereon the City was taken, was the Sabbath, tho' they killed and burnt upon that Day; for he that commanded the Sabbath to be observed, commanded it now to be prophaned for the Destruction of Jericho, as he commanded Burnt Offerings to be sacrificed on this Day: Which is the very Instance whereby our blessed Saviour justifies his doing some Works upon the Sabbath-Day. And here I cannot but note, that it was JEHOVAH, according to this Explication, who gave this Command to compass the City on this Day as well as any other. That great LORD who gave the Command to keep the Sabbath, now dispensed with it: He that spake from Mount Sinai was the Person who appeared to Joshua: For whether this Day was the Sabbath or no, it is certain, one of the seven Days wherein they were thus employed, was the Sabbath, and consequently their Resting on that Day was dispensed withal, by the same Authority that made the Law of the Sabbath.

That he rose early about the Dawning of the Day.] All the six Days, I suppose, they rose early, as they did upon the first (*Ver. 12.*) but upon this Day very early, as soon as they could see, because they had seven times as much Work to do as they had upon the other Days.

And compassed the City after the same manner, seven times.] Not with a continued Motion, I suppose, but resting a while (perhaps after each Circuit) to refresh themselves; otherwise by so much Motion, they might have been dispirited, and unfit to attack *Jericho*, when the Wall of it fell down before them.

Only on that Day they compassed the City seven times.] For so the LORD ordered, *Ver. 4.*

Ver. 16. And it came to pass at the seventh time.] As soon as they had ended the seventh Circuit.

When the Priests blew with the Trumpets.] Such a long Sound as is mentioned, *Ver. 5.*

Joshua said unto the People.] By such Officers as he had appointed to give the Order, when they heard that unusual Sound of the Trumpet.

Shout.] In assured hope of Victory, as it follows in the next Words, *for the LORD hath given you the City.*

Ver. 17. And the City shall be accursed.] All the Commands given in this, and in the two following Verses, could not be delivered just before he had them shout; but they had been given some time before they began to march the seventh time about the City. And if any thing of these Matters was repeated now, it was very briefly, by bidding them remember the Orders they had received concerning the City, and all that was therein.

I have observed elsewhere, that this Word *Cherem* (which we translate *accursed*) signifies sometimes the Gift itself which is devoted to God, for his Uses, *Levit. xxvii. 24.* sometimes that which is devoted to perpetual Destruction, by the Right which God hath to punish capital Enmities to him, as here in this Place. And thus, Mr. *Selden* observes, the great *Sanhedrim* might

might devote those to Destruction, who in War did not observe such Charges as were given them ; of which they find an Instance in *Judg. xxi. 5.* See him *Lib. 4. de Jure Nat. & Gentium, Cap. 6.*

Even it and all that are therein, to the LORD.] As the first Fruits of their Victories, in the Land of Canaan. All whose Inhabitants God ordered to be exterminated ; but thought fit to make such an Example of the first that refused to submit, as to raze their very City, and command it never to be built again : For that this was done by a particular Order from God, appears from *1 Kings xvi. 34.* Thus he commanded even such Cities in *Israel* to be destroyed, as should hereafter revolt to Idolatry, *Deut. xiii. 15, 16, 17.*

Only Rahab the Harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the House. Which is explain'd in the Execution of this Order, *Ver. 23.*

Because she hid the Messengers.] Who swore unto her that she should be preserved : And therefore, both in Justice and Gratitude, *Joshua* was bound to take Care of her ; and, no doubt, had Order from God to make good the Oath of the Spies.

That we sent.] This seems to import, that *Joshua* sent the Spies by the Advice or Consent of the Elders ; tho' it may signify no more, but that he sent them upon a publick Account. See *Ch. ii. 1, 23.*

Ver. 18. And you, in any wise, keep yourselves from the accursed Thing.] Take heed, lest you meddle with any of the Spoils, which are devoted to God, and appropriate them to your own Use.

Lest you make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed Thing.] Bring yourselves under the same Sentence of being devoted to Destruction.

And make the Camp of Israel a Curse.] And, more than that, expose the whole Camp to the same Danger. For many times God takes Occasion to punish the whole Body of a People for their other Sins, when some of them only have highly offended him.

And trouble it.] Disturb the Course of their Victories.

Ver. 19. But all the Silver and Gold and Vessels of Brass and Iron.] And other Metals, I suppose.

Are consecrated to the LORD.] Except the Gold and Silver of their Images, which were utterly to be destroy'd, according to an express Command of God, *Deut. vii. 25, 26.*

They shall come into the Treasury of the LORD.] Which was in the Tabernacle. To the Service of which, such Things were wholly appropriated, and might not be employ'd to any other Use. But it is very probable, that before such Things were put into the Treasury, they were purified, by making them go through the Fire : According to the Law, *Numb. xxxi. 22, 23.* The *Jews* think these Things were given to God, because the City was taken on the Sabbath.

Ver. 20. So the People shouted, when the Priests blew with the Trumpets.] As they had been commanded, *Ver. 16.*

And it came to pass, when the People heard the Sound of the Trumpet, and the People shouted with a great Shout.] This is repeated to shew, that this was all that the People contributed to the Expugnation of this City : Which they wholly ascribed to God.

That the Wall fell down flat.] As the LORD had promised, *Ver. 5.*

So that the People went up into the City, every Man straight before him, and they took the City] As it was easy to do, when the Garrison was in such a Consternation, at the sudden Fall of the Wall, without any visible Force to throw it down ; that, in all Likelihood, they could make little or no Resistance.

Ver. 21. And they utterly destroyed all that was in the City, both Man and Woman, Young and Old, and Ox, and Sheep, and Ass, with the Edge of the Sword.] See *Deut. xx. 16, 17.* Some have observed that there are no Camels here mention'd ; which were not commonly bred in this Country, much less Mules, which were not known in the Land of *Israel* till the Days of *David.* As *Bochart* concludes from the Mention, upon several Occasions, of Oxen, Sheep, and Asses ; but never of these Creatures till his Time. But if there were any other Animals in *Jericho* besides these here named, they were all killed ; for that was the Law of the *Cherem.* As for their killing of Infants and Women, see *Grotius, Lib. III. de Jure Belli & Pacis, Cap. 4. Sect. 9.* And it must also be remembered that they were a People guilty of such foul Idolatry, that it was fit the whole Race of them should be destroyed, as *Sodom* was ; where all the Children perished as well as others. And this was a Type of the entire Destruction of new *Babylon*, mentioned in the *Revelation.*

Ver. 22. But Joshua had said unto the two Men that had spied out the Country.] He had given this Order before the falling of the Wall ; when he began their March on the Seventh Day, the Seventh Time, and before they shouted.

Go into the Harlot's House.] Which, by the wonderful Providence of God over her, was left standing with Part of the Wall upon which it was built, when the rest sunk into the Ground.

And bring out thence the Woman, and all that she hath.] With her in the House.

As ye swore unto her.] *Ch. ii. 14.*

Ver. 23. And the young Men that were Spies, went in, and brought out Rahab, and her Father, and her Mother, and all that she had ; and they brought out all her Kindred.] By this it appears, that all related to her, who took Shelter under her Roof, were preserved from Destruction. Such is the great Clemency of God, who, for the Sake of one excellent Woman, spared a great many that had done nothing to deserve his Favour.

And left them without the Camp of Israel.] They were brought out of the House, because it was to be burnt, with all the rest of the City : Which was to be laid desolate without Inhabitant. And they were carried without the Camp of *Israel*, because it was Holy by the

the Presence of the LORD there : Which made it unlawful for them to enter into it, till they had abjured their Gentile Superstition ; and, by Circumcision, (and by Baptism, as the Custom was in After-times, if not now) admitted into the Body of the *Israelites*.

Ver. 24. *And they burnt the City with Fire, and all that was therein.*] By the just Judgment of God upon it, for the horrible Wickedness committed therein. See *Grotius de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Lib. 3. Cap. 12. Sect. 2.

Only the Silver and the Gold, and the Vessels of Brass and Iron, they put into the Treasury of the House of the LORD.] As had been enjoined before they took the City, ver. 19.

Ver. 25. *And Joshua saved Rahab the Harlot alive, and her Father's Household, and all that she had.*] It is likely her Father and his Household gave Credit to what she said ; and consequently were converted, as she was, to the true Religion, by what they had heard before, and now saw with their own Eyes, of the wonderful Works of God.

And she dwelleth in Israel unto this Day.] Was incorporated with the *Israelites*, and made a Member of their Body ; as all her Kindred, it's likely, were : At least, they became Profelytes of the Gate, (as they called those who renounced Idolatry, and worshipped the God of *Israel*) tho' they were not circumcised. Concerning this Phrase *unto this Day*, see before iv. 9.

Because she hid the Messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.] Which proceeded not merely from her Humanity, but was a noble Act of courageous Faith.

Ver. 26. *And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying.*] He made the Elders and Heads of their several Tribes (I suppose) bind themselves by a solemn Oath, and they took the same Security of all the People ; adding a Curse upon themselves and their Posterity, if any of them broke this Oath.

Cursed be the Man before the LORD.] This shews that this *Cherem*, whereby he adjudged him and his Family to destruction, who should rebuild *Jericho*, was a Sentence pronounced by the LORD ; and not by *Joshua* without his Order. And so we read expressly in the First Book of the *Kings*, xvi. ult. See concerning this *Cherem*, Mr. *Selden*, Lib. 4. *de Jure Nat. & Gent.* Cap. 7. P. 505.

That riseth up and buildeth this City Jericho.] Whose Ruins God would have remain, as a perpetual Monument of his Power, and of his Severity. So *Maimonides*, in his *More Nevochim*, Pars 3. Cap. 50. This *Anathema*, saith he, was pronounced, that the Miracle of the Subversion of *Jericho* might be kept in perpetual Memory : For whosoever saw the Walls sunk deep into the Earth, (as he understands it) would clearly discern that this was not the Form of a Building destroyed by Man, but miraculously thrown down by God.

He shall lay the Foundation thereof in his First-born.] That is, in the Death of his First-born.

And in his youngest Son shall he set up the Gates of it.] The Meaning is, in the Progress of the Work, the rest of his Children should die : And when he had finished it, (which was

when he set up its Gates) he should lose the last of them. Which was fulfilled exactly in the Days of *Abab*, as we read in the Place before-named, 1 *Kings* xvi. 34. Which, by the way, shews this Book of *Joshua* to have been older than the Book of the *Kings*.

We are not to imagine that this *Anathema* reached any farther, than to the Builder of *Jericho* and his Family ; not to those who should inhabit it, after it was rebuilt. For there was a Company of Prophets, who made no Scruple to settle here in future Times, 2 *Kings* i. 15. And if it had been built in any other Place, and not on the Ruins of the old City, (tho' they had given it the Name of *Jericho*) one cannot think he that built it would have fall'n under this Curse. Which either he did not mind, or did not believe, otherwise he would not have ventured to restore this City : Unto which he was tempted by its pleasant Situation, 2 *Kings* i. 19.

Ver. 27. *So the LORD was with Joshua.*] Thus God made good his Promise to him, i. 5, 9. Where the *Targum*, as I observed, hath it, *the WORD of the LORD thy God shall be thy Helper*. And so these Words run in that Paraphrase, *and the WORD of the LORD helped Joshua* : That Divine Person who appeared to him, and encouraged him in this Undertaking, Chap. v. 13, 14, &c.

And his Fame was noised throughout all the Country.] There was no Part of the Country, which did not hear of their wonderful Entrance into it over *Jordan* ; and of the miraculous taking of *Jericho* ; and the Execution done there ; which made the Name of *Joshua* famous among them, as a Captain before whom Rivers fled, and the strongest Walls fell down flat.

CHAP. VII.

Verse 1. *BUT the Children of Israel.*] That is, one among them. Which is an usual Form of Speech in the Holy Scriptures, to ascribe that to many indefinitely, wherein one alone is concerned ; because, where Men are united in a Society, they are all to partake in the Good or Evil that every of their Members doth. Instances of which we find in *Gen.* viii. 4. xix. 29. xxiii. 6. *Jugdes* xii. 7. *Matth.* xxvi. 8. See *Bochart* in his *Hierozyicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 17. Pag. 212. and a great many more Instances he heaps up, P. 2. Lib. 5. Cap. 3. P. 669.

Committed a Trespass in the accursed Thing.] Offended God by purloining to his own Use, some of the Spoils, which were devoted to Destruction, or appropriated to God's Treasury, with a Curse upon him that meddled with them.

For Achan the Son of Carmi.] Who is called *Achar*, in 1 *Chron.* ii. 7. because he having troubled *Israel*, (as the Word *Achar* signifies) Ver. 25. of this Chapter, it is likely, that, in After-times, they turned his Name into *Achar* instead of *Achan*.

The Son of Zabdi.] Who is called *Zimri*, 1 Chron. ii. 6.

The Son of Zerab, of the Tribe of Judab.] For we find *Zerab* was the Son of *Judab*, and came with him into *Egypt*, when he was very young; for we read of no Children he had, Gen. xvi. 12. And if we suppose him to have begotten *Zabdi*, when he was Seventy Years old, and allow as many Years before *Zabdi* begat *Charmi*, and as many before *Charmi* begat *Achan*; we may make Account (with *Bonfrerius*) that *Achan* was now about Fifty Years old; an Age wherein many Men begin to be more covetous than they were in their Youth.

Took of the accursed Thing.] What it was, he himself confesseth, Ver. 21.

And the Anger of the L O R D was kindled against the Children of Israel.] The Sin of one Member of the Body provoked the Divine Majesty to express his Displeasure against them all, (which they deserved upon other Accounts) that they might be awakened to find out, and to punish him, who had brought them into great Danger.

This Preface is made to this Chapter, to shew whence the ill Success they had at *Ai* proceeded.

Ver. 2. *And Joshua sent Men from Jericho to Ai.]* Called *Hai* in *Abraham's* Time, Gen. xii. 8. Which *Joshua*, I suppose, had summoned to surrender, according to the Precept in Deut. xx. 10. but they had refused. It was a City about Three Miles distant from *Jericho*, as the *Jews* say in *Semoth Rabbah*; which *Masius* takes to signify three Leagues.

Which is besides Beth-aven.] Whether *Beth-aven* here signify a City or a Wilderness, is uncertain. See xviii. 12.

On the East Side of Beth-el.] A Place which was but one League from *Ai*, as *Masius* computes, and lay Westward of it, (Gen. xii. 8.) for the War was carried on from the East, where *Jericho* was, to the Western Parts of the Country. It was called *Beth-aven*, in future Times, by way of Reproach, when the Golden Calves were set up in it; which made it not a *House of God*, (as *Beth-el* signifies) but an *House of Iniquity*, i. e. Idolatry, which is the import of *Beth-aven*. But it is plain from hence, these were two distinct Places.

And spake unto them, saying, Go up and view the Country; and the Men went up and viewed Ai.] How it lay, and how it was fortified, &c. And it seems to have been seated in the Hilly Country; and belonged to the *Amorites*, Ver. 7.

Ver. 3. *And they returned unto Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the People go up, but let about two or three Thousand Men go up, and smite Ai, &c.]* They thought this Number would be sufficient, because, as it follows in the End of the Verse, *they were but few*; and therefore they would not have all *Israel* put to the Trouble of marching thither. In which Counsel a good Providence of God interposed; for if the Flight of Three Thousand Men put the *Israelites* into such a Consternation, (as we read, Ver. 5, 6.) what a Condition would they

have been in, if all the People had been put to the Worse? as they would have been, if they had attacked *Ai*, while this Guilt remained among them.

Ver. 4. *So there went up thither of the People about three Thousand Men, and they fled before the Men of Ai.]* Who seeing so small a Number, came out and engaged the *Israelites*; whose Courage quite failed them, so that they seem not to have struck a Stroke, but immediately run away. For God had left them; to whom they owed all their Valour and Victories.

Ver. 5. *And the Men of Ai smote of them about Thirty and Six Men.]* Of the hindmost of them, it is most likely, who could not run away so fast as the rest.

For they chased them from before the Gate.] Of the City *Ai*.

Unto Shebarim.] A Place, I suppose, between *Ai* and *Jericho*; which the *Targum* thinks had its Name from the Rout of the *Israelites* there.

And smote them in the going down.] Till they came to the Plains of *Jericho*. For *Ai* standing on a Hill, there was a Descent from thence thither.

Wherefore the Hearts of the People melted.] As Wax doth before the Fire, (Psalm lxviii. 2.) or as Ice before the Sun.

And became Water.] Weak and wavering, in uncertain Resolutions; not knowing what to do.

Ver. 6. *And Joshua rent his Cloaths.]* As the Manner was when they were full of Grief, upon Occasion of any great Calamity, or the Commission of any great Crime. Which Custom was very ancient, Gen. xxxvii. 34. xliv. 13. and continued in the Times of the Prophets; who make it a Crime that Men did not rend their Clothes, when grievous Sins were committed.

And fell to the Earth upon his Face.] To make his Supplication to God for Mercy.

Before the Ark of the L O R D.] Not in the Sanctuary, but with his Face towards it. In Imitation of which, the *Præcentor* in the *Jewish* Synagogue, at this Day, falls down before the Chest, wherein they keep the Book of the Law, when he takes it out to read; as *Buxtorf* observes in his *Synag. Judaica*. And on solemn Fast-Days, as the *Misna* tells, such Prostrations were usual.

Until the Even-Tide.] Continued all Day in Fasting and Prayer to God.

He and the Elders of Israel.] Who rent their Cloaths, I suppose, as he had done; and then presented themselves, in this mournful Manner, before God, to implore his Mercy.

And put Dust upon their Heads.] This was still an higher Expression of great Grief, and of a deep Sense of their Unworthiness to be relieved. Which was very usual in this Nation, (1 Sam. iv. 12. 2 Sam. i. 2. &c.) and was imitated by the *Gentiles*; as we see in the Example of the *Ninevites*, *Jonah* iii. 6. and of *Achilles*, who bewailed the Death of *Patroclus*, by throwing Dust on his Head, and lying down in the Dust, as *Homer* describes it in *Iliad*, 2. Ver. 23, 24.

Ver.

Ver. 7. *And Joshua said, Alas, O LORD God.]* A Form of Speech dolefully bewailing their forlorn Condition: Which did not misbecome so great a Captain as Joshua was; for the most generous Spirits have the most tender Sense of Humanity, as *Arius Montanus* excellently discourses upon this Place.

Wherefore hast thou at all brought this People over Jordan, to deliver us into the Hands of the Amorites to destroy us?] This is not a sinful Expostulation with God (for Joshua is not reprehended for it, but graciously instructed) but only a Confession of his Ignorance, why God should do such Wonders for them as he had done, and now let them fall into the Hands of those Enemies, whom they had conquered on the other side of Jordan. And it is, as if he had said, I am confounded in my Thoughts, being unable to understand why, &c. and consequently he humbly desired to be informed in the Reason of this Change of his Providence.

Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan.] As far as he could apprehend, they had better have rested satisfied with what they had in Possession, than be thus defeated in their Attempt to acquire more.

Ver. 8. *O LORD what shall I say.]* What Course shall I take? Or, how shall I answer the Reproaches of our insulting Enemies?

When Israel turneth their Backs before their Enemies?] What Hope is there of conquering them, or preserving ourselves?

Ver. 9. *For the Canaanites and all the Inhabitants of the Land will hear of it.]* They that are at the greatest Distance, by the Sea-side, will hear the Report of our Defeat; which will soon be spread over the whole Country.

And shall environ us round about.] Be encouraged thereby to gather all their Forces together, and surround us.

And cut off our Name from the Earth.] Utterly destroy us.

*And what wilt thou do unto thy great Name?] And, which was worse, God would lose the Glory of all the Miracles he had wrought, and be thought unable to accomplish what he had begun to do for his People. This Argument Moses had formerly pressed, *Exod. xxxii. 12. Numb. xiv. 16. Deut. ix. 28.* and God himself, in the Song which he had Moses teach the People, makes use of it, *Deut. xxxii. 26, 27.**

Ver. 10. *And the LORD said unto Joshua, Get thee up; why liest thou thus upon thy Face?] These Words are not a Reproof, but a gracious Answer to his Prayers; for when a Person who supplicates a Prince is commanded to rise up from his Knees, it is a Token of Acceptance.*

Ver. 11. *Israel hath sinned.] See ver. 1.*

And they have also transgressed my Covenant which I commanded them.] They had promised Obedience to all God's Commands, *Exod. xxiv. 7.* and assured Joshua they would do whatsoever he had them, *i. 16, 17, 18.* And this was a late Command delivered by him from God, that they should not meddle with any thing devoted to God, with a solemn Curse.

For they have even taken of the accursed thing.] That which belongs to me, ver. 1.

And have also stolen, and dissembled also.] Not only purloined that which God reserved to himself; but denied it after the Fact was done. For I suppose Joshua, after the Destruction of Jericho, had made Enquiry, whether the Silver and Gold, &c. were brought into the Treasury, and whether they had destroyed all other things, as God commanded; and they all answered, that they had.

And they have put it even amongst their own Stuff.] To conceal it from discovery: Or, it is an Expression of his impudent Transgression of God's Command, in converting it immediately to his own private Use. For in this Verse the Crime is aggravated in a gradual manner, in that Achan had not only sinned, but against the Covenant they had solemnly made with him; and that in a Matter of great Importance, in which he had lately laid his Injunctions upon them; having not only taken to himself what belonged to God, but done it by way of Stealth, as if he could not see it; and likewise denied the doing of it; and persisting in the Sin, by mixing what he had stolen with his own proper Goods.

Ver. 12. *Therefore the Children of Israel could not stand before their Enemies, but turned their Backs before their Enemies, because they were accursed.]* By having a Man among them, who was fallen under the Curse of God.

Neither will I be with you any more, except you destroy the Accursed from among you.] These Words shew that only one Man among them was accursed, tho' they all suffered for it; and were to continue to suffer, till he was destroyed. For now that they knew there had been such a crime committed among them, they had been as guilty as Achan, if they had not punished it.

Ver. 13. *Up.]* He was not still lying on the Ground, for God had bid him rise before, and he, I suppose, had obeyed him: But this is a Word whereby he quickens him to make all the Speed he could, to do as he now directed him.

Sanctify the People.] Call upon them to sanctify themselves; as it here follows.

And say unto them, sanctify yourselves.] As they did when they were to meet the LORD at Mount Sinai, *Exod. xix. 10, &c.* and as they were lately commanded to do, when he led them over Jordan, *iii. 5.* For now they were to appear before his Majesty, that an Inquisition might be made who he was that had been guilty of this foul Crime.

To-morrow.] For he would not have the Guilt remain any longer upon them.

For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel.] He speaks in this Style, both to awaken them to sanctify themselves; and also to appear before the LORD next Morning.

Thou canst not stand before thine Enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you.] Both the Person that had violated the Anathema; and the Thing he had purloined.

Ver. 14. *In the Morning therefore ye shall be brought.]* Before the LORD.

According

According to your Tribes.] Some principal Persons of every Tribe, representing the rest, were set before the LORD.

And it shall be, that the Tribe which the LORD taketh, shall come according to the Families thereof; and the Family which the LORD shall take, shall come by Households; and the Household which the LORD shall take, shall come Man by Man.] There is no Difficulty in these Words, but only to understand how this Inquisition was made, and the Author of the Fact discovered: Which is not here expressed, there being no Words to signify how the LORD took one Tribe, and Family, and Household, and Person, from the rest. The *Jews* (who are never at a Loss in these Matters) tell us, that when they stood before the Sanctuary, the High-Priest was in it with the *Urim and Thummim*; wherein were twelve Stone's, with the Names of the Children of *Israel* engraven in them. And when that Tribe, suppose, to which the guilty Person belonged, was called, that Stone in which was the Name of that Tribe, changed Colour; and so it did when the Family, and the Household, and the Person were called. But this is a mere Fancy of the Stones shining, or becoming dusky; by which, I have shewn elsewhere, Answers could not be given to Enquiries by *Urim and Thummim*. And what others of them say, is not much better: For instance, *Kimchi*, who tells us some are of Opinion, that they being made to pass before the Ark, the Guilty could not stir a Foot. See several other Conceits in *Buxtorf's Historia Urim & Thummim*, p. 304, &c.

But the plainest Account of this Matter is this, that they were discovered by casting of Lots, in the Presence of God; which was an usual Way in After-Times of discovering noxious Persons, 1 *Sam.* xiv. 41, 42. *Jonah* i. 7. So *Josephus*, L. 5. Cap. 1. and *Rablag*.

Ver. 15. *And it shall be, that he that is taken with the accursed thing, shall be burnt with Fire.]* After they had stoned him to Death with Stones, ver. 25.

He and all that he hath.] His Children, and his Cattle; his Tent, and all his Goods; as it is explained ver. 24.

Because he hath transgressed the Covenant of the LORD.] Ver. 11.

And because he hath wrought Folly in Israel.] Committed a very heinous Sin.

Ver. 16. *So Joshua rose up early in the Morning.]* It is probable he acquainted no body with these Orders; but made all the haste he could to put them in Execution: For if they had been known abroad, *Achan's* Guilt might have made him flee from so terrible a Sentence.

And brought Israel by their Tribes; and the Tribe of Judah was taken.] Who, if we may believe the *Jews*, immediately stood to their Arms, and would not lay them down, till they saw the Man apprehended and punished who had done this thing.

Ver. 17. *And he brought the Family of Judah, &c.]* Every Family of that Tribe, till that of the *Zarbites* was taken.

And he brought the Family of the Zarbites Man by Man.] That is, every Head of their several Households, as he was directed, ver. 14.

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And Zabdi was taken.] That is, the Lot fell upon his Household.

Ver. 18. *And he brought his Household Man by Man, and Achan the Son of Carmi, the Son of Zabdi, the Son of Cerab, of the Tribe of Judah, was taken.]* Here the Samaritan Chronicle tells the very same Story with the *Talmudists*, that the Stone in the Breast-plate of the High-Priest, in which was engraven the Name of *Judah*, was darkened when *Achan* was named. See *Hottinger's Smegma Orientale*, Cap. 8. p. 505.

Ver. 19. *And Joshua said unto Achan, My Son.]* All great Minds are full of Tenderness and Compassion; and nothing more unbecomes a Prince, than violent Passion: Which *Joshua* was so far from expressing on this Occasion, that he speaks to him with the greatest Mildness imaginable.

Give, I pray thee, Glory to the LORD God of Israel.] The Samaritan Chronicle before named, paraphrases this not amiss; *Lift up thine Eyes to the King of Heaven and Earth, and acknowledge that nothing can be hid from him; who knows the greatest Secrets.*

And make Confession unto him, and tell me now what thou hast done.] Openly confess thy Guilt; and relate to me what it is, that thou hast converted to thine own Use.

Hide it not from me.] Who thou see'st have God at hand, to discover that which none of us know but thyself.

Ver. 20. *And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel.]* Which the Samaritan Chronicle thus expresses; *I acknowledge that I have grievously sinned before God, who knows all secret and hidden Things: For I have prevaricated against the Covenant of God, and against his Ambassador.*

And thus and thus have I done.] Committed this Sin, with such Circumstances, as here follow.

Ver. 21. *When I saw among the Spoils.]* He doth not say in what Place: but the forenamed Chronicle saith, it was as he entered into one of their Temples.

A goodly Babylonish Garment.] There are a great many Opinions about this Garment; which *Bochart* most probably judges to have been a *Various Garment*, as the *LXX* translate it; that is, of divers Colours, wherein were several Figures either woven or wrought with a Needle; for which sort of Work *Babylon* was famous, in so much that they were called *Painted Garments*; which made a most glorious Shew, and therefore was very inviting to the Eye of *Achan*: Who was tempted by its Lustre, to reserve one of these Garments for his own Use, or to sell; for they were of an immense Price. See him in his *Phaleg*, Lib. 1. Cap. 6. where he hath a long Dissertation about this Garment.

And two hundred Shekels of Silver.] Which is as much as an hundred German Dollars, as *Marius* observes.

And a wedge of Gold.] In the Hebrew a Tongue for it had that Shape.

Of Fifty Shekels Weight.] This may be understood two ways; either that it was worth so many Shekels in Value, that is, Fifty Dollars; or, that it weighed as much as Fifty Shekels,

D

that

that is, three hundred Dollars. The last Sense *Mafius* thinks most probable.

Then I coveted and took them.] To his own Use; when he should have brought them into God's Treasury, *James i. 15.*

And behold they are hid in the Earth in the midst of my Tent.] Till he could have Time to dispose of them to his best Advantage.

And the Silver under it.] The Silver was immediately under the *Babylonish* Garment, and the Gold under that: For both Silver and Gold are here meant, tho' one only mentioned.

Ver. 22. Then Joshua sent Messengers, and they ran to the Tent.] Left any one should remove them, and render the Fact dubious; and that the Children of *Israel* might be speedily expiated.

And behold it was hid in his Tent, and the Silver under it.] They found the *Babylonish* Garment (as was said before) hid in the Earth, and the Silver and Gold under it. The *LXX* indeed understand it, as if the Gold and *Babylonish* Garment were uppermost, and the Silver under them: For so they translate these Words both here and in the foregoing Verse, τὸ ἀργύριον ὑποκάτω αὐτῶν, *the Silver under them.* The Wedge of Gold perhaps was wrapt in the *Babylonish* Garment; and so the Silver might be said to lie, either under it, or under them.

Ver. 23. And they took them out of the midst of the Tent.] Where he told them he had buried these things.

And brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the Children of Israel.] For they were all assembled at the Tabernacle, waiting to see the Issue of this Matter.

And laid them before the LORD.] That the Fact might be manifest, and the *LORD* acknowledged to be omniscient.

Ver. 24. And Joshua and all Israel with him.] By an universal Consent.

Took Achan the Son of Zerab.] He was Zerab's Great Grandchild.

And the Silver, and the Garment, and the Wedge of Gold.] Which God would not have put into his Treasury, after they had been thus perverted to a private Use.

And his Sons, and his Daughters.] This seems very hard, that they should be executed in such a terrible manner, as here follows, for their Father's Fault. But the *Jews* in *Pirke Eliezer* say, they were punished, because they were privy to their Father's Stealth, and concealed it. Others think this was a necessary Severity in the Beginning of a new Empire, and of a plentiful Fortune, upon which they now entered; that they might not wantonly abuse it. But there are those, who think this is but a seeming Difficulty; *Achan* alone being stoned (as we read in the next Verse, *all Israel stoned him with Stones*) and his Children brought forth to be Spectators of it. And when it is said, in the Conclusion of the next Verse, *they stoned them with Stones*, it relates to his Oxen, and Asses, and Sheep, which were stoned with him. See *Guil. Vorstius*, in his Annotations on *Pirke Eliezer*, p. 224.

And his Oxen, and his Asses, and his Sheep, and his Tent, and all that he had.] This was

done, to represent to the People the Heinousness of this Offence; and to strike such a Terror into them, that they should not dare to commit the like.

And they brought them unto the Valley of Achor.] Which had its Name from him, *ver. 26.* See there.

Ver. 25. And Joshua said.] He was the sole Judge, as the *Jews* think, in this Matter. And whereas, by the Law, none might be condemned out of the Mouth of one Witness, nor was any Judge to sit alone, without Assistants, (according to their Doctors) nor any Man's Testimony to be admitted against himself, (because in a mad Fit, he might undo himself) yet their King had this singular Prerogative, that he might try a Man alone by himself, and condemn him out of the Mouth of one Witness, nay, from his own Confession; as *Joshua* did here (who was their King or supreme Governor) in *Achan's* Case; and as *David* did afterward in the Case of the *Amalekite*, *2 Sam. i. 15.* See *G. Schickard*, in his *Jus Regium*, Cap. 4. Theor. 14. But *Joshua* is impertinently alledged as a Proof of this extraordinary Power; for it was God who convicted *Achan*, and pronounced this Sentence; which *Joshua* only put in Execution.

Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this Day.] The Doctors in the *Hierusalem Talmud*, in the Treatise *Sanhedrim*, Cap. 6. fancy there is a peculiar Emphasis in these Words, *this Day*. As if he had said, *In this Day thou shalt be troubled, but thou shalt not be troubled in the World to come.* For they think that he having given Glory to God by confessing his Sin, had all his Punishment here.

All agree *Joshua* alludes to his Name; the Word *Achar*, signifying to trouble or disturb. Or rather, his Name was changed from *Achan* unto *Achar*, because of this Disturbance which he gave to all *Israel*.

And all Israel stoned him with Stones] Which was a Punishment of great Crimes, as I have observed elsewhere. See *Lev. xx. 9, 11, 12, 13, &c.* as I remember. This is said to be done by all *Israel*; because they were all present, and consenting to it.

And burnt them with Fire, after they had stoned them, with Stones.] Burnt their dead Carcasses. Why they were both stoned, and also burnt, *Eliezer* in his *Pirke*, and *Vorstius* upon him, gives a Reason in the Place above-named.

Ver. 26. And they raised over him a great Heap of Stones unto this Day.] As a Monument of his Sin, and of God's Judgment upon him. Thus they did with *Abfalom*, *2 Sam. xviii. 17.* And Houses or Cities which were destroyed, are said to be turned into an *Heap*, *Isa. xxv. 2.* or *Heaps*, *Jerem. ix. 11.* as a Token of their utter Ruin.

And the LORD turned from the Fierceness of his Anger.] Was reconciled to his People, after they had executed his Sentence against him, that provoked his Anger. So the *Samaritan Chronicle*. Thus the Anger of God was removed from the Children of *Israel*, and he was pleased with what they had done. See *Deut. xiii. 17.*

Wherefore

Wherefore the Name of that Place.] Where he was stoned and burnt.

Was called the Valley of Achor unto this Day.] From that Time all the People called this Place by that Name, in Memory of this Execution done upon Achar : So he was also called ever after this. For tho' his Name was Achan, yet from henceforward they called him Achar, the Troubler of Israel. And so he is here called in the Syriack Version, and by Josephus, Athanasius, Basil, and others mentioned by Bochartus ; as Ezra himself also calls him, 1 Chron. ii. 7. See Hierozoicon, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 31. in the latter End.

C H A P. VIII.

Ver. 1. **A**ND the LORD said unto Joshua.] Who, it is likely, now consulted God about their Progress in this War : Which he had not done before (vii. 2.) being sufficiently authorized by what God had often said to him, and by their Success against Jericho : But this late Defeat before Ai, might make him think it necessary to take Advice of the Divine Majesty, before he attempted any thing farther.

Fear not, neither be dismayed.] Because of the late ill Success ; of which he now knew the Cause ; which was removed.

Take all the People of War with thee.] This Order may seem strange, since the People themselves thought two or three thousand were sufficient, if God were with them. But God would have them all to share in the Spoil of Ai ; that they who had obeyed him in abstaining from laying their Hands on any thing in Jericho, might be now rewarded for it, by the Prey of this City ; as it follows in the next Verse.

And arise, go up to Ai.] Which, it appears by this, was in the Hill Country.

I have given into thy Hand the King of Ai, and his People, and his City, and his Land.] He bids him be confident of a complete Victory, as if he had already won it.

Ver. 2. *And thou shalt do to Ai and her King, as thou didst to Jericho and her King.]* Only with such a Difference, as follows in the next Words.

Only the Spoil thereof, and the Cattle thereof, shall ye take for a Prey unto yourselves.] None of the Silver or Gold, or any thing else, was separated to God's Use, nor ordered to be destroyed ; but they were to enjoy it all entirely themselves.

Lay thee an Ambush for the City behind it.] On the West of it ; for they were now in Gilgal, which lay Eastward.

Ver. 3. *So Joshua arose, and all the People of War, to go up against Ai.]* In Obedience to the Divine Direction, Ver. 1.

And Joshua chose out thirty thousand mighty Men of Valour, and sent them away by Night.] When they were less liable to be observed.

Ver. 4. *And he commanded them, saying, Behold ye shall lie in wait against the City, even*

behind the City.] Like a great General, he assigns their Post to every Part of the Army.

Go not very far from the City.] Lie as close to it as you can, without being discovered.

But be ye all ready.] To seize upon the City, when all the People were drawn out of it.

Ver. 5. *And I, and all the People that are with me, will approach unto the City.]* As if they intended to assault it.

And it shall come to pass, when they come out against us, as at the first.] Which he rationally presumed they would, being flush'd with such good Success.

That we will flee before them.] Counterfeit a Flight, as soon as they appeared.

Ver. 6. *For they will come out after us, till we have drawn them from the City.]* Pursue them, with all their Force.

For they will say, They flee before us as at the first ; therefore we will flee before them.] He gives the Reason of their Flight, without striking of a Stroke (as we now speak) that all the People might be enticed out of the City, in Pursuit of them, as he concluded they would be ; because now there was a greater Number of the Israelites than before ; which would require their whole Power to deal withal.

Ver. 7. *Then ye shall rise up from the Ambush, and seize upon the City.]* Upon the Signal given, mentioned Ver. 18.

For the LORD your God will deliver it into your Hand.] He would not have them fear to enter the City ; which he assured them God would put into their Possession.

Ver. 8. *And it shall be, when ye have taken the City, that ye shall set the City on Fire.]* The Gate where they entered, or some of the Skirts of the City ; as a Token they were possessed of it. For they were to take the Spoil of the City before they burnt it, ver. 28.

According to the Commandment of the LORD shall ye do.] And not transgress, as Achan did.

See, I have commanded you.] Acquainted them with the Will of God ; in the Observance of which, they might be confident of Success.

Ver. 9. *Joshua therefore sent them forth, and they went to lie in Ambush.]* He selected these thirty thousand Men out of the rest of the Army ; and when it was dark, they went upon the fore-named Design.

And Joshua lodged that Night among the People.] The fore-named Detachment (as we now speak) was commanded by some great Officer, in whom Joshua confided ; but he himself lay all Night in the Body of the Army ; that he might be ready in the Morning to give the necessary Orders.

Ver. 10. *And Joshua rose up early in the Morning, and numbered the People.]* He first gave Orders to the Officers (for he could not do it himself alone) to see that none of the People were wanting.

And went up, he and the Elders of Israel, before the People, to Ai.] And when he commanded them to march, he was attended by the Elders of Israel, leading them on towards Ai. But it is uncertain who are here meant by the Elders of Israel. Some think, the chief Commanders

ders in the Army ; but they are never called *Elders*, much less the *Elders of Israel*. But the Rulers and Judges are called by this Name, who, I suppose, waited upon *Joshua* as a Council of War ; being Men authorized by G O D to assist the supreme Governor, *Numb. xi. 16, 24, 25.*

Ver. 11. And all the People, even the People of War that were with him went up and drew nigh, and came before the City.] The Distance between *Gilgal* and *Ai* being but three Leagues, it is likely, the People being mustered early in the Morning, they got thither before Noon. Those Words, *even the Men of War that were with him*, seem to be opposed to the *thirty thousand*, whom he had sent before to lie in Ambush, *Ver. 3.*

And pitched on the North Side of Ai.] Here the main Body of the Army lay, behind the Hills, it's likely, so that they were not discovered till the Evening, or the next Day.

Now there was a Valley between them and Ai.] Where they of *Ai*, I suppose, drew up ; when they resolved to engage them.

Ver. 12. And took about five thousand, and set them to lie in Ambush between Bethel and Ai.] Which Places were but a League distant one from the other. See *vii. 2.*

On the West Side of the City.] Where the former Detachment was ordered to lie, *Ver. 4.* But these seem to have been a distinct Party from them, and sent, it's likely, for another Purpose ; to intercept all those that might think to save themselves, by flying thro' By-ways, which they were to guard. There are those indeed who think that there were but *thirty thousand* Men in all employed in this Expedition against *Ai* ; and that out of them these *five thousand* Men were sent to lie in Ambush, that they might, in convenient Time, set Fire to the City. See *Masius*. But this is so directly contrary to G O D's Command, to *take all the People of War with him*, *Ver. 1.* and to what is said, *Ver. 3, 11.* that I cannot think it to be true. One had better say, this Party was added to strengthen the *thirty thousand* Men in their Undertaking.

Ver. 13. And when they had set the People, even all the Host that was on the North of the City, and their Liers-in-wait, on the West of the City.] That is, when Things were thus disposed about the Evening.

Joshua went that Night into the midst of the Valley.] To pray to G O D, it is likely, for a Blessing upon their Enterprize.

Ver. 14. And it came to pass, when the King of Ai saw it.] That is, was informed of their investing the City on the North Side of it ; which it is likely was in the Evening, or late that Night.

That they hasted.] He called a Council, and they speedily resolved to dislodge the *Israelites*.

And rose up early, and the Men of the City went out against Israel to Battle, he and all his People.] The Meaning is, all that could fight went out, and their King at the Head of them.

At a Time appointed.] They had agreed all to issue out at several Gates (it is likely) at a certain Hour.

Before the Plain.] He means, perhaps, the Valley which lay between *Ai* and the Camp of *Israel* ; before which they drew up their Army to engage the *Israelites*.

But he wist not that there were Liers in-Ambush against him behind the City.] The King had no Intelligence of that strong Party, which *Joshua* had sent to lie behind the City ; they keeping, I suppose, their Gates shut (as they did at *Fericho*, that none could get in or go out, *vi. 1.*) and suspecting no Danger from the Western Coast, where they lay, but only from the East, whence they knew the *Israelites* were to march.

Ver. 15. And Joshua, and all Israel, made as if they were beaten before them.] At the first Onset, *Joshua* himself turned his Back, and all the rest of his Army ; as if they durst not stand before them.

And fled by the Way of the Wilderness.] Which lay between *Fericho* and *Ai*.

Ver. 16. And all the People that were in Ai.] Who were able to fight.

Were called together to pursue them.] I suppose some of the Men of War might be left in the City till they saw the *Israelites* fly, and then they were all called out, (as *Ver. 14.*) is to be understood) together with those of *Beth-el*, who were come to their Assistance ; being near Neighbours, and both under the same King.

And they pursued after Joshua, and were drawn away from the City.] They were so eager in their Pursuit, that they were drawn to a greater Distance from *Ai*, than they would have been, if they had considered the Danger of leaving it naked.

Ver. 17. And there was not a Man left in Ai.] None that were able to fight.

Or Beth-el, that went not out after Israel.] For they of *Beth-el*, it appears by these Words, were come to the Assistance of *Ai*, before any of the Army of *Israel* arrived : For afterwards they could not, because the Ambush lay between *Beth-el* and *Ai*, *Ver. 9.*

And they left the City open, and pursued after Israel.] There was not so much as a Man left to guard the Gates ; but all were engaged in the Pursuit.

Ver. 18. And the LORD said unto Joshua.] G O D secretly suggested to him, that now was the Time for the Ambush to fall upon the City ; when the Army was drawn so far from it that they could not return soon enough to relieve it.

Stretch out the Spear that is in thy Hand, towards Ai.] He bids him face about (as we now speak) and stop the Flight of the *Israelites*. It is much disputed what the Hebrew Word *Chidon* signifies ; which the Vulgar Latin translates a *Shield*. But *Bochartus* hath taken a great deal of Pains to shew, that it every where signifies in Scripture a *Spear* (as we translate it) or a *Lance*, or some kind of such-like offensive Weapon ; especially in this Place, he thinks, there can be no Doubt of it : For it was a Weapon he had in his Hand, and was to stretch forth towards the City ; that it might be a Signal to those in Ambush to rise and enter the City ;

and to those who fled, to make a Stand, and encounter the Enemy. To which purpose, nothing could be more proper than a Spear, with a Flag, it is highly probable, at the End of it, (like to our Ensigns) which made it more visible. See *Hieroicoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 8. P. 135, &c. The LXX. here translate it *γάρσον*, which *Suidas* says signifies a kind of Weapon, *ὄϊον δόρατος*, like to a Spear. See the same most learned Author, in his *Canaan*, Lib. 1. Cap. 42. P. 744.

For I will give it into thy Hand.] As he promised, *Ver. 1.*

And Joshua stretched out the Spear that he had in his Hand toward the City.] That all Israel might see it; as they did the Rod of Moses, when they fought against *Amalek*.

Ver. 19. And the Ambush rose quickly out of their Place.] Being admonished by some Divine Suggestion (as *Masius* thinks) as well as by the Signal, that now was the Time to execute their Design.

And they came as soon as he had stretched out his Hand] Which they might see from some of the Hills, at the Back of which they lay. But why they should watch for this Sign, or understand what it meant, unless *Joshua* had received this Order, and told it them before they went, cannot be conceived.

And they entered into the City, and took it.] For there was no body to oppose them.

And hasted and set the City on Fire.] In one Place; which it is likely was on the North Side of the City; that both the *Israelites* and the People of *Ai* might see the Smoak. This the LORD had strictly commanded, (see *Ver. 8.*) which made them make such haste, as soon as they had possessed themselves of the City, to set fire to it.

Ver. 20. And when the Men of Ai looked behind them.] I suppose there was a great Shout made by all the *Israelites*, when they saw the Smoak ascend; which made the Men of *Ai* look about them.

They saw, and behold the Smoak of the City ascended up to Heaven.] The firing of any Out-Houses, or Barns, was sufficient to make such a Smoak; for it is certain the City was not yet burnt. See *Ver. 28.*

And they had no Power to flee this Way or that Way.] Either they were so dismayed, that they stood stock-still (as we speak) or found themselves so environed, that they could no way escape. For on the North and East Sides, the great Army came upon them; and on the West the Ambush issued forth against them; and the other five thousand Men block'd up their Way on the South: Which could not but very much amaze and perplex their Minds; and the more, to see all their vain-glorious Hopes vanished, which their King no doubt had entertained, of stopping the Progress of the *Israelites*, and being the Deliverer of his Country.

And the People that fled to the Wilderness turned back upon the Pursuers.] Ver. 15. They counterfeited a Flight no longer, but now boldly look'd their Enemies in the Face.

Ver. 21. And when Joshua and all Israel saw.]

By this it is plain, the whole Body of the Men of War were here; and not only three thousand of them, as some suppose. See *Ver. 12.*

That the Ambush had taken the City, and that the Smoak of the City ascended.] Whereby they understood it was taken.

Then they turned again, and slew the Men of Ai.] After they had made a Stand a while, and rallied, they fell upon the Men of *Ai*, and made a great Slaughter of them.

Ver. 22. And the other issued out of the City against them, so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side and some on that side; and they smote them, so that they let none of them remain, or escape.] By this Stratagem, they were all entirely cut off.

Ver. 23. And the King of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua.] Perhaps they were ordered so to do; that he might be made a publick Spectacle of the Divine Vengeance.

Ver. 24. And it came to pass, when Israel had made an end of slaying all the Inhabitants of Ai.] That is, the Men of War.

In the Field, in the Wilderness wherein they chased them.] By this it appears, that they fled before the *Israelites*, as soon as they turned upon them; having no Heart to fight them, *Ver. 20.*

And when they were all fallen by the Edge of the Sword, until they were consumed.] This is repeated to express a complete Victory.

That all the Israelites returned unto Ai.] From whence they counterfeited a Flight.

And smote it with the Edge of the Sword.] All the People that were left in it; as every one was, that was not able to go to War.

Ver. 25.] And so it was, that all that fell that Day, both of Men and Women, were twelve thousand.] By which it appears, this was no great City; and that they who were sent to view the Country, had Reason to think a small Party sufficient to subdue it, vii. 2, 3. For the Men of *Beth-el* seem to be included also in this Number; being mixed with those of *Ai*; from whom the *Israelites* could not distinguish them.

Even all the Men of Ai.] The Inhabitants of the City (as it follows in the next Verse) and the Territory about it, great and small, Men and Women.

Ver. 26. And Joshua drew not his Hand back, wherewith he stretched out the Spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the Inhabitants of Ai.] But kept his Arm extended, with the Spear in it; as Moses his Rod was lifted up during the Fight with *Amalek*. Or, the Meaning may be, that he himself charged them, and continued to fight, as long as there was a Man left.

Ver. 27. Only the Cattle and the Spoil of the City.] i.e. Their Silver and Gold, and Household-stuff, &c.

Israel took for a Prey unto themselves, according unto the Word of the LORD, &c.] Who was so far from reserving any of these Things to himself that he made an express Grant of them to the *Israelites*, *Ver. 2.*

Ver. 28. And Joshua burnt Ai.] After they had gotten all the Spoil of it; which had been lost, if it had been burnt before by the Liers-in-Ambush. See *Ver. 8, 19.*

And

And make it an Heap, even a Desolation, unto this Day.] Laid it waste ; so that it was known only by its Ruins for a long time after ; as it was at the time when this was written. See *Ver. 11, 26.*

Ver. 29. And the King of Ai be hanged on a Tree.] Being the Head of a very wicked People, who was fit to be made a publick Spectacle of God's Displeasure. *Lipsius*, in his *Book de Cruce*, Lib. 1. Cap. 11. produces this as an ancient Instance of crucifying notorious Malefactors. But that is a great Mistake, Crucifixion being no Jewish, but a Roman Punishment. Nor were crucified Persons hanged and strangled, as the King of *Ai* and *Haman* were, but fastened alive to a Cross, with Nails struck into their Hands and Feet. The *LXX.* indeed here expound it, *he was hanged*, ὃν ἐν σταυρῷ διδόμεν, wherein they seem to have respect to the Figure of the Cross ; but there is no such thing in the *Hebrew*. See *Numb. xxv. 4.*

Until the Even-tide ; and as soon as the Sun went down, Joshua commanded that they should take his Carcass down from the Tree.] For so God had commanded, *Deut. xxi. 22, 23.* See there.

And cast it at the entering of the Gate of the City.] Where he was wont to sit in Judgment ; and, in all Probability, had exercised a great deal of Injustice and Cruelty.

And raised thereon a great Heap of Stones, that remaineth unto this Day.] As they did upon *Achan*, vii. 26. and for the same end, to be a Monument of his being hanged near to this Place.

Ver. 30. Then Joshua built an Altar unto the LORD God of Israel in Mount Ebal.] If this Mount lay between *Ai* and *Beth-el* (as *Gerardus Mercator* endeavours to prove by many Arguments) then this Altar, we may well think, was built immediately after the taking of *Ai*, as soon as they came into Possession of this Mount : For they look'd upon themselves, no doubt, as obliged to fulfil the Command of God, given them by *Moses*, as soon as it was possible. But the Scripture plainly describes this Mount *Ebal*, as near *Shechem*, for there was only a Valley between *Ebal* and *Gerizzim*, from whence *Jotham* spake to the Men of *Shechem* (*Judg. ix. 7.*) which was a great way distant from *Ai*. And therefore we must suppose that which is here related, not to have been done till they had the Country about *Shechem*.

Ver. 41. As Moses, the Servant of the LORD, commanded the Children of Israel.] Deut. xi. 29, 30. xxvii. 2, &c. See in those Places.

As it is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, an Altar of whole Stones, over which no Man hath lift up any Iron.] The Altar was built according to the Direction given by God, in a foregoing Law of his, *Exod. xx. 25.* and repeated in *Deut. xxvii. 5, 6.* See there.

And they offered thereon Burnt Offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed Peace Offerings.] For now they renewed their Covenant with God the third time, as I observed upon that Chapter in *Deuteronomy*, *Ver. 10.*

Ver. 32. And he wrote there upon the Stones a Copy of the Law of Moses, which he wrote in

the Presence of the Children of Israel] It is a great Question what it was he wrote upon these Stones. Some fancy all the five Books of *Moses* ; others, only the Book of *Deuteronomy* ; which is more likely than the other ; but too long for these Stones to contain, or for him to write, *in the Presence of all Israel*. Others, therefore, think only the *Ten Commandments* ; or a Compendium of the Law of *Moses* ; or, perhaps, the *Blessings and Cursings* : But *Fortunatus Scacchus*, with some Probability, conjectures, that he only wrote the *Words of the Covenant*, by which the Children of *Israel* acknowledged they held the Land of *Canaan*, of God, as their great LORD ; upon Condition they observed his Laws, to which they and their Posterity were obliged. And this he principally grounds upon those Words, *Deut. xxvii. 3. Thou shalt write upon them all the Words of this Law.* Where the *Hebrew* Word *Hazoth* (*This*) he thinks hath a particular Respect to what he is speaking of ; viz. their going over *Jordan* to possess the Land which God gave them, upon Condition they observed his Statutes. See *Sacror. Elæochrism. Myrother. Lib. 2. Cap. 57. P. 570, &c.* and my Notes upon *Deuteronomy xxvii. 3.*

Ver. 33. And all Israel, and their Elders, and Officers, and their Judges, stood on this side of the Ark, and on that side.] With their Faces towards the Ark.

Before the Priests the Levites, which bare the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD.] Who were to pronounce the Blessings and the Cursings prescribed by the Law. See *Deut. xxvii. 24.*

As well the Stranger, as he that was born among them.] For the Law made no Distinction between them, *Levit. xix. 34.*

Half of them over against Mount Gerizzim, and half of them over against Mount Ebal, as Moses the Servant of the LORD had commanded before.] In *Deut. xxvii. 12, 13* See there.

That they should bless the People of Israel.] There were Cursings, as well as Blessings pronounced : But the Intent of Cursing was, that they might avoid those Sins against which they were denounced ; and thereby obtain a Blessing.

Ver. 34. And afterwards he read all the Words of the Law, the Blessings and the Cursings, according to all that is written in the Book of the Law.] Viz. In *Deut. xxvii. Ver. 15, 16, 17. &c.* The Word *afterward* is not to be neglected, which imports, that after the building of the Altar, and the offering Sacrifices thereon, and writing the Law on the Stones, and disposing the People in their Place about the Ark, then he read the Law to them. Which was likely to be heard with the greater Attention, when they were thus prepared to receive it, and had solemnly worshipped God, and owned his Authority.

Ver. 35. There was not a Word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua did not read before all the Congregation of Israel.] Viz. All that *Moses* directed in *Deut. xxvii.* or, as others will have it, the whole Book of *Deuteronomy*, wherein these Blessings and Cursings are contained. See *Deut. xxxi. 13.*

With

With the Women, and the little ones, and the Strangers that were conversant among them.] By the Strangers here mentioned (and in *Ver. 33.*) are to be understood such as were *Profelytes* to their Religion: And had undertaken to observe this Law, as well as themselves; and therefore were to be made acquainted with it. And that they might be moved to have the greater Regard to it, *Joshua* himself, their chief Governor, read it to them. So some of the *Jews* understand it; after the *Priests* had read the Blessings and Cursings, then *Joshua* read all the commanding and forbidding Precepts in the Law.

C H A P. IX.

Verse 1. *AND it came to pass, when all the Kings which were on this Side Jordan, in the Hills, and in the Valleys, and in all the Coasts of the Great Sea.]* By the Great Sea, is meant the *Mediterranean*; where those People, peculiarly called *Canaanites*, dwelt, as hath been often observed. And the *Amorites* seem to have been the principal Inhabitants of the Hilly Country, in the South of *Judæa*. See on *Deut. i. 7, 19, 20.*

Over against Lebanon.] The *LXX.* and the *Vulgar* understand this, as if he spake of those that dwelt near *Lebanon*.

The Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite.] Thus they are reckoned up in *Deut. xx. 17.* where the *Gergasites* are omitted, as they are here. See an Account of it in my Notes upon that Place: And on *Chap. xvi.* of this Book, *Ver. 10.*

Head thereof.] Of the taking of *Jericho* and *Ai*: For what is said, in the Words immediately foregoing, concerning the *Israelites* meeting at Mount *Ebal*, is not inserted as a Thing wherein these Nations were concerned.

Ver. 2. That they gathered themselves together to fight with Joshua, and with Israel.] They entered into a Confederacy to oppose *Joshua's* farther Progress in the Conquest of their Country. But they did not gather themselves to Battle, till they heard what *Gibeon* had done.

With one Accord.] The whole Country were unanimous in that Resolution: And thereupon rejected the Summons which *Joshua* had sent them to surrender themselves and their Cities to him.

Ver. 3. And when the Inhabitants of Gibeon.] Or, *But when, &c.* *Gibeon* was a City in the mountainous Country; for we read afterward of an high Place at *Gibeon*.

Heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai.] They being *Hivites*, (*Ver. 7.*) had at the first rejected the Offers of Peace which *Joshua* sent them, as the rest of their Nation, (*Ver. 1.*) had done. But hearing that *Joshua* had taken *Jericho* and *Ai*, and destroyed all their Inhabitants, they repented of that Resolution; and consulted how they might, by some Means or other, make their Peace with the *Israelites*.

Ver. 4. And they did work wilily.] It being

too late to surrender their City to *Joshua* upon such Terms, as he is supposed to have offered, (for there was no Mercy to be shewn them, after they had stood out against the three Proclamations, which the *Jews* say were made to them) they contrived how to put a Fallacy upon the *Israelites*, and by Craft and Cunning procure their Favour. See my Annotations on *Deut. xx. 10, 11.*

And went.] They chose some from among them, who went in the Name of the rest, towards the Camp of *Israel*.

And made as if they had been Embassadors.] Pretending that they were sent upon an Embassy to them, from a far Country; as they affirmed, *Ver. 6.*

And took old Sacks upon their Asses.] Wherein was their Provision.

And Wine-Bottles, old, and rent, and bound up.] Where they were rent.

Ver. 5. And old Shoes clouted upon their Feet.] As if they had been worn out, and patched up, with long Travel.

And old Garments upon them, and all the Bread of their Provision was dry and mouldy.] It is observed by *Arias Montanus*, that nothing is said of the Decay of their Wine: Which they pretended, it is likely, to have drank all up, in so long a Journey. For it was not so easy to procure four Wine, as mouldy Bread.

Ver. 6. And they went to Joshua, unto the Camp at Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the Men of Israel.] They addressed themselves to him, as the Head of the People; and he had his Council about him: who, in all probability, are here called *the Men of Israel*. Though some conceive, that they had laid hold of every one they met withal, and beseeched them to admit them to their Friendship.

We are come from a far Country.] To sue to you for your Friendship.

Now therefore make ye a League with us.] As they might do with those that accepted the Offers of Peace, which they sent them, (*Deut. xx. 11.*) and therefore much more with those who came to seek to be at Peace with them: And were not Inhabitants of the Land of *Canaan*, but came from a far Country: which they gave as a Reason, why they should make a League with them. And indeed, they had been to blame, if they had denied their Petition: As the *Romans* were, who when they were grown great, refused to receive a remote Nation into their Protection (as *Appian* tells us) who by their Embassadors submitted themselves to their Power, because they did not see they were likely to get any thing by them. Which *Bodinus* (in his Book against *Malestrettus de Caritate Rerum*) censures as a base Action, and injurious to Almighty *GOD*. As if (saith he) the Majesty of ruling and administering Justice, especially to miserable and ill instructed People, were not the greatest Gift of *GOD*; and the highest Honour of which a Man is capable in this World.

Ver. 7. And the Men of Israel said.] This shews that *the Men of Israel* before-mentioned, were not ordinary Persons, but such as had Authority to treat with Embassadors.

Unto

Unto the Hivites.] Unto those who came from Gibeon, who were really *Hivites*, as is expressly said, xi. 19.

Peradventure you dwell among us.] Are some of the People of this Land; which we are commanded to rout out.

And how shall we make a League with you ?] Then it is utterly unlawful for us to do what you desire: For God hath often forbidden it, *Exod. xxiii. 32, 33.—xxxiv. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. Deut. vii. 2, 3, &c.* and other Places.

Ver. 8. And they said unto Joshua.] With whom alone they had a Desire to treat.

We are thy Servants.] This doth not signify that they were ready to yield themselves to be Tributaries to the *Israelites*, or accept of any Terms that should be imposed on them: But are only Expressions of great Humility and Civility; acknowledge the *Israelites* to be superior in Power and Strength, and therefore desiring their Protection in their Liberties. Thus *Abraham* addressed himself to the Travellers, whom he entertained as greater Persons than himself, *Gen. xviii. 3, 4.* And *Jacob* calls himself and his Household the Servants of *Esau*, *Gen. xxx. 20.* And thus *Batrirides* understood their Language here; who says the King of Gibeon wrote a Letter to *Joshua*, wherein he desired Security from him; and presented him with great Gifts, as *Hottinger* observes in his *Smegma Orientale*, Cap. 8. p. 507.

And Joshua said unto them, Who are ye? And from whence come ye?] They being backward to name the Country from whence they were sent; it begat a reasonable Suspicion in *Joshua*, that they were some of the People of *Canaan*.

Ver. 9. And they said unto him, From a very far Country thy Servants are come.] They still avoid giving a particular Account of their Country, but answer in general Terms; in which commonly lies Deceit.

Because of the Name of the LORD thy God.] To divert him from pressing them to give a more satisfactory Answer, they pretend Religion had invited them to take this long Journey: Which they knew would procure them a favourable Audience.

For we have heard of the Fame of him, &c.] Of his miraculous Works, particularly those which he did to deliver them from the *Egyptian* Slavery; which, as it is evident, were come to their Knowledge: So, it is very reasonable to believe, such wonderful Things were the Motives that made them seek for the *Israelites* Friendship; they being wrought upon, as *Rahab* was, to embrace their Religion.

Ver. 10. And all that he did to the two Kings of the Amorites, that were beyond Jordan, to Sihon King of Heshbon, and to Og King of Bashan, which was at Ashtaroth.] They say not a Word of the drying up of *Jordan*, and of the taking of *Jericho* and *Ai*: But prudently conceal their Knowledge of those Things, because they would have it supposed the Tidings of those Wonders could not yet be arrived at a Country so far off, as they pretended theirs to be.

Ver. 11. Wherefore our Elders.] The princi-

pal Persons in their Country: Who were the Rulers and Governors of it.

And all the Inhabitants of our Country.] With the unanimous Consent of all the People.

Spake to us, saying, Take Victuals with you for the Journey.] Made choice of us for this Embassy; and ordered us to provide ourselves with Necessaries for so long a Journey.

And go to meet them.] To prevent the *Israelites* from entertaining any hostile Intentions against them.

And say unto them, We are your Servants: Therefore now make ye a League with us.] The *Samaritan* Chronicle saith, they had Orders to tell *Joshua* that they would embrace the *Jewish* Religion; and refuse nothing, great or small, that he should desire of them. And indeed, one would think, by what they said before, that they had a Sense of the God of *Israel*, as superior to all other Gods: And consequently, were disposed to become Worshipers of him. For which Reason, he was pleased to dispose Things so, that, by their Wiles, they should compass their End, and be entertained into the Friendship of the *Israelites*.

Ver. 22. This our Bread we took hot for our Provision out of our Houses.] When it was newly come out of the Oven.

On the Day we came forth to go unto you; but now behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy.] This they say to demonstrate that they came from a Country far distant from *Canaan*. Which tho' it was not true, yet there are those (particularly *Puffendorf*) who think it was not culpable, nor properly a Lye; being a Device to save their Lives. For who will reprehend a Person, saith he, who by a Fiction preserves himself from being killed by an Enemy? Especially in such a Case as this, wherein the *Israelites* suffered no Damage by their Craft? For what Loss doth he sustain, who is hindered from shedding another Man's Blood, but hath it in his Power to despoil him of all he hath, and bring him into perpetual Servitude, so disarmed and weakened that he can never rise up against him? Thus he. Which is a Doctrine that ought not to be allowed.

Ver. 13. And these Bottles of Wine, which we filled, were new, and behold, they be rent: And these Garments and our Shoes are become old, by reason of the very long Journey.] They use thus many Words, to divert him from making any farther Enquiry, what the Name of their Country was (lest some among the *Israelites*, who had many Strangers in their Camp, should have been able to disprove them) and mention only the long Time they had spent in their Journey, that he might be moved to be kind unto those, who had taken so much Pains to beg the Favour of the *Israelites*.

Ver. 14. And the Men.] That is, the Persons mentioned, *Ver. 7.* who were the *οἱ ἀρχοντες* (as the *LXX.* here say) the *Princes* or *Rulers* of *Israel*.

Took of their Victuals.] Not to eat them, but to inspect and examine them, whether their Provision was so dry and mouldy as they pretended. For the Word we translate *Victuals*, is the very same with that we before translate *Provision*,

Provision, ver. 5. Which shews he doth not speak of Victuals now prepared, but which they brought along with them. Some indeed think the Meaning is, that they entered into a League with the *Gibeonites*, by tasting of their Victuals. But as this must suppose that they had made a Feast for the Entertainment of these Princes, and invited them to it, (which is altogether unlikely) so the making a League with them follows after this, in the next Verse, and therefore was not made by taking of their Victuals.

And asked not Counsel of the Mouth of the LORD.] These words may seem to favour the Sense now mentioned; that by eating with them (which was a Token of Friendship) they had performed Part of the Ceremony which belonged to the making of Leagues, without consulting the Divine Majesty about it, but hastily believing an improbable Story. See *Gen. xxvi. 30, 31. — xxxi. 44, 45.* But the Meaning of these Words may be no more than this; that they depended wholly upon their own Judgment, and that founded on such slight Examination of the Truth, as only taking their Victuals into their Hands, and inspecting them; when God was near at hand to give them Advice, if they would have consulted him; and it is probable, would have allowed them to make a League with the *Gibeonites*, on such Conditions as he directed.

Ver. 15. And Joshua made Peace with them.] Following the Opinion of the Princes; who took them to be what they pretended.

And made a League with them, to let them live.] Not merely to spare their Lives (which, supposing them to belong to a far Country, they had no Warrant to take away) but to let them continue in the Enjoyment of all they had. For *to live* in Scripture, signifies to be happy; and therefore he promised not to hurt, but to protect them in their Rights and Liberties.

And the Prince of the Congregation swore unto them.] Ratified the League by a solemn Oath; the Violation of which, in future Times, was severely punished, *2 Sam. xxii. 6.*

Ver. 16. And it came to pass, at the End of three Days, after they had made a League with them, that they heard that they were their Neighbours, and that they dwelt among them.] Speedy News being sent by the pretended Embassadors to *Gibeon* of their good Success, (as we may well think) there were great Rejoicings made there, as *Arias Montanus* supposes. The Report of which came to the *Israelites* three Days after the League was concluded.

Ver. 17. And the Children of Israel journeyed.] Not the whole Body of the People, but a party was sent to understand the Truth.

And came unto their Cities on the third Day.] On the third Day after they began their March thither.

Now their Cities were Gibeon, and Chephirah, and Beeroth, and Kirjath-jearim.] The Capital City was *Gibeon* (called a *Royal City*, *x. 2.*) upon which the other three were Dependents. The three first of which fell afterward to the Tribe of *Benjamin* (*xviii. 25, 26.*) as the last was in the Tribe of *Judah*, *xv. 60.*

Ver. 18. And the Children of Israel smote them

not.] Tho' they were not such, as they supposed, but *Canaanites*, who were under the Curse of God; yet they did not destroy them, for the Reason following.

Because the Princes of the Congregation had sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel.] Some think their Oath did not bind them, because it was made upon a false Supposition, that the *Gibeonites* were no Part of the seven Nations of *Canaan*. But if this were true, as it is not, (see *Grotius de Jure Belli & Pacis*, *L. 2. Cap. 13. Sect. 4.*) the Princes judged right, that it had been very scandalous, and would have highly dishonoured the Name of God, by whom they had sworn, if they had broken their Oath. By the keeping of which, the Reverence which the *Gibeonites* had already to the Divine Majesty, was very much increased; whereas it had been vile in all People's Eyes, if the *Israelites* had not expressed this great Regard unto it.

And all the Congregation murmured against the Princes.] Or, *But* all the Congregation murmured, &c. because they were hereby deprived of the Spoil of those Cities.

Ver. 19. But all the Princes said unto all the Congregation.] Their Unanimity in this Opinion, was of great Moment to quiet the People's Discontent.

We have sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel.] Especially since they had engaged themselves, by a solemn Oath, to their great and glorious LORD; who fought for them, and gave them all their Victories, *ver. 13, 14.* For so the *Targum* here expounds these Words, *We have sworn by the WORD of the LORD God of Israel.*

Now therefore we may not touch them.] That is, do them any hurt; which we cannot do without breaking our Oath, and forfeiting his Favour.

Ver. 20. This we will do unto them, we will even let them live.] As they had covenanted, *ver. 15.*

Lest Wrath be upon us, because of the Oath which we swore unto them.] Lest God be very angry with us for breaking our Oath. Which *Joshua*, *St. Ambrose* observes, religiously observed, *Ne, dum alienam perfidiam arguit, suam fidem solveret*, that he might not be guilty of so shameful a Thing, as to break his Faith, whilst he reproved their Perfidiousness. *Lib. 3. de Officiis, Cap. 10.*

Ver. 21. And the Princes said unto them.] But they added this.

Let them live.] Tho' we let them live, because we must be as good as our Word, which is the Meaning of the last Words of this Verse (which must be joined with these) *as the Princes had promised them.*

But let them be Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water.] Yet they shall not be equal to us in all Privileges, but we will make them in some sort serviceable to us; in such Employments, as will save us a great deal of Labour.

Unto all the Congregation.] They were not to be Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water for every private Person; but for the Benefit of the whole Congregation of *Israel*; who were bound

bound to find Wood and Water, for the Service of God at the Tabernacle. Which Burden it was now resolved should be laid upon the *Gibeonites*; and thereby the Children of *Israel* eased of it, *ver.* 23. where they are said to be made *Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water for the House of the LORD*. This was no Breach of their Oath, for they did not make them absolutely Slaves, but only a Sacred kind of Servants (as *Josephus* call them) being employed about the House of God; which was in itself honourable, and not base and contemptible. Some think they were afterwards called *Nethinim*, which signifies Persons given to God for his Service; of whom we read in *1 Chron.* ix. 2. *Ezra* vii. 20. and other Places.

Ver. 22. *And Joshua called for them.*] For the Embassadors, with whom he had made a League.

And he spake unto them saying, Wherefore have ye beguiled us? &c.] Imposed upon our Belief by a false Story.

Ver. 23. *Now therefore ye are cursed.*] Notwithstanding our Oath, you must not quite escape that Curse of God, which hath long lain upon all the People of *Canaan*, Part of which you are. For a servile State of any sort, to which they were reduced, was no small Punishment (called here a *Curse*) and so much the more grievous, because it was to be perpetual.

And there shall none of you be freed from being Bondmen.] None of them were to continue Freeman, but have a Servitude imposed upon them: Not indeed such an one, as made them entire Slaves; but only condemned them to the laborious Employment which here follows.

And Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water for the House of my God.] This is the Limitation of their Servitude; which did not extend to all things, but only to these and such like (it is probable) to hew Stones, for instance, for the Reparation of the Temple after it was built; and to carry them to those who were employed in that Work. *Grotius* hath well expressed their Condition, *Additi sunt personali cuidem servituti*, they were addicted to certain personal Servitude: whereas, if they had dealt plainly and openly with the *Israelites*, they might have been admitted only to pay a certain Tribute. *Lib. 2. de Jure Belli & Pacis, Cap. 13. Sect. 4. N. 3.*

Ver. 24. *And they answered Joshua and said, Because it was certainly told the Servants, how that the LORD thy God commanded his Servant Moses to give you all the Land, and to destroy all its Inhabitants, therefore we were sore afraid of our Lives because of you, and have done this thing.*] They first give an Answer unto *Joshua's* Demand, *Wherefore have ye beguiled us?* Which was done to save themselves, if they could, by any Shift, from that Destruction, which they believed God had decreed against all the Inhabitants of their Land; and they did not know how to evade it, but by this Artifice; which, since it arose from some Degree of Faith God suffered to take Effect, that they might remain for ever among the *Israelites*, as an unquestionable Witness of their miraculous Conquest of the Land of *Canaan*.

Ver. 25. *And now behold, we are in thy Hand;*

as it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do.] Here they humbly submit to the Doom he had passed upon them, or to any other Imposition he should think fit to load them withall.

Ver. 26. *And so he did unto them, and delivered them out of the Hand of the Children of Israel, that they slew them not.*] But *Joshua* would take no farther Advantage of their Submission, but contented himself with this Burden alone; which by a publick Decree he laid upon them. It appears by this, that some *Gentiles* had more Goodness in them than many of the Children of *Israel*; who would have destroyed these well-disposed People (if *Joshua* had not hindered) who were better Believers, being struck with a greater Fear of God's Threatnings, than themselves.

Ver. 27. *And Joshua made them that Day Hewers of Wood and drawers of Water.*] He passed this Sentence into a Law; that from henceforth they should be subject to this Servitude; in which they served God faithfully even to the Times of *Nehemiah*: Who tells us great Numbers of the *Nethinims* (who many great Men make no doubt were of the Posterity of these *Gibeonites*) returned from *Babylon* to rebuild *Jerusalem* and the Temple, *Nehem.* vii. 46. &c. 73.

For the Congregation, and for the Altar of the LORD, even unto this Day.] They served the Congregation (who otherwise must themselves have done it) by serving the Altar with Wood and with Water. Which that they might do regularly, it is probable they were dispersed throughout all the Coasts of *Israel*, where the Priests and Levites were settled, and came and served with them in their Courses, and (as *Conradus Pellicanus* thinks) were maintained out of the Publick Stock, and the Profits of the Altar. For they did not keep Possession of their Cities, but surrendered them to the Tribe of *Benjamin* and *Judah*, to whose Lot they fell; as we read in the following Part of this Book.

Concerning these Words, *unto this Day*, see *iv.* 9.

At the Place which he shall chuse.] Which was now at *Gilgal*; afterwards at *Shiloh*; and some time in *Gibeon* it fell; which was a City given to the Priests, *Josh* xxi. 17. and, as *Maimonides* saith (in his Treatise of the Building of the Temple) after *Shiloh* was destroyed, the Tabernacle was placed in *Nob*, and then in *Gibeon*: in which two Places it continued fifty and seven Years.

C H A P. X.

Ver. 1. **N**OW it came to pass, when *Adonizedek* King of *Jerusalem*.] Who seems to have been the most potent Prince in *Canaan*, and carried in his Name an honourable Title which had been anciently given to the Kings of this Place; who had been famous for doing Justice. For it is probable, that ever since *Melchizedek*, who was King of *Salem* (the same with *Jerusalem*) and truly King of Righteousness,

teousness, as his Name signified ; they affected this Title, tho' they did not always answer their Character : For this *Adonizedek* (whose Name imports the *Lord of Righteousness*) had none of the Virtues that were in *Melchizedek*.

King of Jerusalem.] It is probably thought that this City held the Name of *Salem*, which it had in *Abraham's* Time, till the *Israelites* came into the Land of *Canaan* ; and then they called it *Jerusalem*, when they first took Possession of it. Which they did not so fully, but that still the *Jebusites* dwelt there with the Children of *Benjamin*, (see *Judg. i. 8, 21.*) who were so weak, that the *Jebusites*, in time, recovered it wholly to themselves, and expelled the *Benjamites* ; see *Judg. xix. 10.* where it is called *Jebus* ; tho' the other Name is also acknowledged ; because the *Israelites* called it *Jerusalem*, while the *Jebusites*, having prevailed, called it *Jebus*.

Heard how Joshua had taken Ai.] By which Means, the *Israelites* were come nearer to him, than when they took *Jericho*.

And had utterly destroyed it, (as he had done to Jericho and her King, so he had done to Ai and her King).] And therefore it highly concerned him to provide, the best he could, for his own Safety.

And how the Inhabitants of Gibeon had made Peace with Israel.] Especially since one of the prime Cities of the Country had submitted to the *Israelites*.

And were among them.] Joined in Society with them, or come (as we now speak) into their Interest.

Ver. 2. Then they feared greatly.] All his People thought themselves in great danger ; they as well as their King having heard of the terrible Execution *Joshua* had made at *Jericho* and *Ai*.

Because Gibeon was a great City.] Having others depending on it.

As one of the Royal Cities.] The *Vulgar Latin* takes no Notice of the Particle *Capitulum* (as) but saith, it was a Royal City. And indeed, that Particle doth not always denote *Likeness*, but only the Truth of the Thing spoken of ; as in *Hosea iv. 4.* and many other Places of the New Testament, as well as the Old, *Job. i. 14. Phil. ii. 7.* But I think here it should be expressed, as we do in our Translation ; because *Gibeon* was not a Royal City, that is, had no King in it, that we read of ; but was, notwithstanding, equal to those Cities that had Kings, being governed by Elders (*ix. 11.*) who were Persons of very great Authority.

And, because it was greater than Ai.] More populous.

And all the Men thereof were mighty.] The Inhabitants were esteemed Men of great Valour ; which made their Revolt to the *Israelites* the more considerable.

Ver. 3. Wherefore Adonizedek, King of Jerusalem, sent unto Hobam King of Hebron, and unto Piram King of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia King of Lachish, and unto Debir King of Eglon, saying.] All these Cities afterwards belonged to the Tribe of *Judab* ; as appears from the following Part of this Book.

Ver. 4. Come unto me, and help me.] He was the most active in the War, and seems to have been of greatest Power ; calling the other Kings, only as Auxiliaries to him.

That we may smite Gibeon.] He thought to discourage others from yielding, by making this City an Example of their Vengeance.

For it hath made Peace with Joshua, and with the Children of Israel.] Forsaken the Interest of their Country, and gone over to our Enemies.

Ver. 5. Therefore the five Kings of the Amorites, the King of Jerusalem, &c.] It is certain that *Hebron* belonged to the *Hittites* ; as *Jerusalem* did to the *Jebusites*. But the *Amorites* being the most powerful People in *Canaan*, (as appears from *Gen. xv. 16.*) had, it seems, brought them under their Power, and set Kings of their own Nation over them. Whence it is, that the *Gibeonites*, who were originally *Hivites* (*ix. 17.*) are said to be of the Remnant of the *Amorites*, (*2 Sam. xxi. 2.*) because they were fallen under their Power, when *Joshua* conquered the Country.

Gathered themselves together. Had a general Meeting and sent out Summons to all their People, who were fit for War, to rendezvous (as we speak) at the Place they appointed.

And went up.] Tho' they lived in the high Country, yet *Jerusalem* was still higher ; where they seem to have all met, according to *Adonizedek's* Desire ; *Ver. 4.*

They and all their Hosts, and encamped before Gibeon.] Laid Siege to it.

And made War against it.] Began to assault it.

Ver. 6. And the Men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the Camp to Gilgal.] Or, had sent, as soon as they heard of their March towards them.

Saying, Slack not thy Hand from thy Servants.] They doubted not of his Succour, because they were his Servants, who had put themselves under his Protection ; but begged it might be speedy, for fear they should be overpowered by such numerous Forces as were coming against them.

Come up quickly, and save us and help us, for all the Kings of the Amorites that dwell in the Mountains, are gathered together against us.] They did not hope to be preserved without his Help ; not unless it arrived quickly.

Ver. 7. So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he and all the People of War with him, and all the mighty Men of Valour.] These last Words are the Explication of the former, as if he had said, *All the People of War, even all the mighty Men of Valour.*] For it is not likely he took along with him all the fighting Men (some of which were necessary to guard the Camp at *Gilgal*) but only the choicest of them ; on whose Valour he could most rely, and who could march most swiftly to the Relief of their Confederates.

Ver. 8. And the LORD said unto Joshua.] Before he stirr'd a Foot, he consulted the Divine Majesty about this Expedition ; who encouraged him to undertake it.

Fear them not, for I have delivered them into thine Hand ; there shall not a Man of them stand before

before thee.] He promised him an entire Victory ; which embolden'd him to fall upon them undauntedly.

Ver. 9. *Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all Night.*] Accordingly Joshua made all the haste he could towards them, marching all Night, that he might surprize them in their Quarters (as I suppose he did) before they could draw out their Army against him.

Ver. 10. *And the LORD discomfited them before Israel.*] The Suddenness of the Attack, no doubt, put them into great Confusion. And besides, God struck a Terror into them, which made them seek for Safety by Flight, rather than Fighting.

And slew them with a great Slaughter at Gibeon.] Near to the City, as the Particle *Beth* signifies in many Places ; particularly in the second Chapter of this Book, where *Rahab's* House is said to be upon the Wall, (we translate it, near or adjoining to the Wall) and *V. 13.* where *Joshua* is said to be *Bejericho*, near to that City, for he was not in it when the Captain of the LORD's Host appeared to him. See *Bochart his Hierozoicon*, P. 1. L. 2. C. 50.

And chased them along the Way that goeth up to Beth-horon.] To the Place which was called by this Name, when this Book was written ; for there was no such Place now ; it being built after they were settled in *Canaan* by *Sherab*, Daughter or Granddaughter of *Ephraim* ; as we read in *1 Chron. vii. 24.*

And smote them to Azekab, and unto Makkedab.] Two Cities afterward in the Tribe of *Judab*, *xv. 35, 41.* For in the great Confusion wherein they were, by the Hailstones falling upon them, (as it here follows) they fled backward and forward, as we speak, sometimes this way, sometimes the quite contrary, (for *Beth-horon* lay Northerly, and these other Towns in the South) according as the Hailstones, by the shifting of the Wind, flew in their Faces.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon.*] Which was seated on the Side of a Hill ; and seems to have taken its Name from this wonderful Storm here-mentioned : For *Beth-horon* signifies as much, as the House or Place of Fury or Anger.

That the LORD cast down great Stones from Heaven upon them.] The *LXX.* call them *λίθαι χαλάζης* Hailstones of a vast Bigness ; which some think were accompanied with Thunder and Lightning. And thus the ancient Heathen say, that *Hercules* was assisted in his War against *Albion*, &c. See *Vossius*, Lib. 1. *de Orig. & Progressu Idol.* Cap. 26. And that Raining of Stones is not a Fable, but a real Truth, see him also, Lib. 3. Cap. 12. *Plutarch* also, in the Life of *Timoleon*, relates how a terrible Storm in the Face of the *Carthaginian* Army, gave him a great Victory over them, with a very few Forces which he had to encounter them. They that desire to see more to this purpose, may look into *Huetius* his *Quæstiones Alnetanæ*, Lib. 2. Cap. 12. Sect. 12.

Unto Azekab.] The Storm meeting them at

Beth-horon, drove them back to *Azekab*, as observed on the foregoing Verse.

And they died.] They upon whom the Hailstones fell, were killed by them.

They were more that died with the Hailstones, than they whom the Children of Israel slew with the Sword.] For they could not flee from the Stones, which came from Heaven ; as they did from the Sword of *Israel*.

Ver. 12. *Then spake Joshua unto the LORD.*] This Song, as the *Hebrews* call it, see *Masius*.

In the Day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the Children of Israel] It is not certain at what Time of the Day he spake what follows. Many think, when the Sun was declining ; others, rather in the Morning. For he marched all Night to surprize them, and in all Probability fell upon them by break of Day ; and having routed and chased them for some Hours, and killed great Numbers of them, and seen others fall by the Hailstones, concluded he should destroy them all, if he had but Time enough before Night came to favour their Escape. Which made him pray that he might have Light to continue his Pursuit, and gain a complete Victory over them.

And he said in the Sight of Israel.] It is a frivolous Observation of *Maimonides*, that because it is not said *in the Sight of ALL Israel* (before whom *Moses* did his Miracles) *Joshua* was inferior to him, even when God wrought this stupendous Miracle at his Request : For all *Israel* did not hear him speak these Words, but only some few ; as many perhaps as were with *Elijah* at Mount *Carmel*, when he brought Fire down from Heaven to consume his Sacrifice. But there is no question that *Israel* signifies all the Army ; who heard, or were told what he said.

Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon.] He desired it might stand immoveable, in that Part of the Heavens, where he saw it now shining upon *Gibeon*.

And thou Moon, in the Valley of Ajalon.] There were more *Ajalons* than one ; and it is not certain which it is he means : But it is most likely, that in the Tribe of *Dan*, (*xix. 42. Judg. i. 35.*) which was farthest from *Gibeon* ; for we must suppose these two Places to have been at some Distance, otherwise *Joshua* could not have seen the Sun and the Moon both appear at the same Time ; as it is probable they were both now in his Eye, when he spake these Words. It is not fit to enter into such Questions as these ; in what Sign the Sun now was, and whether the Moon was in her Increase or Decrease, &c. They that can make, and are disposed to such Enquiries, may consult *Bonslerius*.

Ver. 13. *And the Sun stood still, and the Moon stayed.*] Thus *Callimachus* represents the Sun as stopping the Wheels of his Chariot, to behold a Chorus of *Nymphs* ; which so highly pleased him ; that it made him prolong the Day, *ver. 181, 182.* of his Hymn to *Diana*.

Ἥλιος παρ' Ἡελίου καλὸν χρόνον ἀλλὰ θεῖται
Δίφρον θηπύσας, τὰ δὲ φάεα μηκύνονταί.

Where *Ezek. Spanhemius* excellently notes, that what the Poets only fancied might be, was really

done in the Days of *Joshua*; and wishes *Grotius* had not followed some of the *Jews*, who make this only a poetical Phrase to express a long Summer's Day: For the Prophet *Habakkuk* represents it otherwise, and so do many of the *Talmudick* Doctors. They that can consult *Huetius* also, in his *Alnetanæ Quæstiones* (Lib. 2. Cap. 12. Sect. 27.) will find enough to shame those who disbelieve this History: When they read a great Number of Stories among the Heathen, which shew they thought it within the Power of their Gods, to do such Things. And, among other memorable Things, he doth not forget the ancient Tradition of the *Egyptians*, related by *Hærodotus* (in his *Euterpe*, Cap. 142.) concerning the stupendious Alteration of the Course of the Sun. And our Dr. *Jackson* hath observed, that the Heathen People of those Times did note this miraculous Event and deliver the Tradition of it to their Posterity; who, as Men are wont to do, endeavour to assign some Cause of it. And the Poets in Ages following ascribe it (with some Additions) unto that unnatural Murder which *Atreus* committed: At which the Heavens blushed, and the Sun stood still. For this bloody Fact, if *Statius* mistakes not, was in the Time of the *Theban* War; and that is placed, by good Chronologers, about the Time of *Joshua's* Conquest of *Canaan*. See Book 1. upon the *Creed*, Chap. 15. But in this he was deceived, for *Atreus* lived in the Days of the *Judges*.

Until the People had avenged themselves upon their Enemies.] Till they had gained a complete Victory, and utterly destroyed their Enemies.

Is not this written in the Book of Jasher?] The *Targum* expounds it, in the *Book of the Law*: As if the meaning was, that their God had foretold, what Wonders he would do for his People. But from the marginal Translation, (which is, *the Book of the Upright, or of righteous Men*) others take it for a Book, where was recorded the wonderful Things done by, or for, the religious Heroes. And there are some probable Arguments, that it was written in Verse, to fix these things in the Memory of the People. *Grotius* is of this Opinion: For we find mention of it no where else, but only in 2 *Sam.* i. 18. and there it is mentioned upon account of a Song, made upon the Death of *Saul* and *Jonathan*, by King *David*; who caused it to be recorded in this Book. Which was not accounted sacred (being written by several Hands, and in several Ages) and so not preserved with such Care, as this and the other Canonical Books were. As for their Opinion, who think this Book contained the ancient Annals of the *Jews* more largely than they are recorded in this and the following Books, it hath no Ground at all; but is invented merely to frame an Argument from thence, that *Joshua* was not the Author of this Book; but that it was collected in After-times, out of this great *Chronicle*, by somebody who made an Abridgment of it. But *Du Pin* hath well observed, that it is not said here the Wars of *Joshua* were related in the Book of *Jasher*; but only that Mention is

made therein of the Miracle by which the Moon stood still.

So the Sun stood still.] There is no more Mention of the Moon; for it was the Light of the Sun that made the Day.

In the midst of Heaven.] This doth not necessarily signify, that it stood still precisely in the Meridian Point; but that it appear'd, visible to every body, fixed in the same Place where it was, when *Joshua* spake the foregoing Words, to which he was moved, no doubt, by a Divine Inspiration.

And hastened not to go down about a whole Day.] It may be simply translated *a whole Day*: The Particle *Caph*, as I observed before, signifying oft-times nothing of Similitude, but the very thing itself. Therefore I look upon *Maimonides's* Explication as ungrounded; who by *Kajom Thammim* (as *a whole Day*) understands only, as the longest Day in Summer, *More Nevochim*, P. 11. Cap. xxxv. Which was a poor Business, it being now Summer-Time, when this Miracle was wrought: And, as *Lyra* thinks, in the Month of *June*.

Ver. 14. *And there was no Day like that, before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened to the Voice of a Man.*] That is, did, at his Desire (or rather Command) such a stupendous Thing as this. Whereby he gave an evident Demonstration, that he who did such Wonders in *Egypt*, and at the *Red Sea*, and the River *Jordan*, had an absolute Power not only over the Elements (as we call them) and all inferior Creatures, but over the Heavenly Bodies, the Sun, Moon and Stars, whom the Heathen worshipped. They have strange Love to Cavilling, who would hence have it thought, this Book was not written by *Joshua*: When, if he wrote it in his old Age, there were many Days passed since this Prodigy, as *Huetius* well observes in his *Demonstr. Evangelica*. P. 186. See various Opinions about the Length of this Day in *Sixtinus Amama* his *Antibarbarus Biblicus*, Lib. III. P. 381, &c.

For the LORD fought for Israel.] By throwing Stones from Heaven upon their Enemies; and giving the *Israelites* Strength to pursue them; and stopping the Sun's Course, that they might not want Light for their Pursuit; and preserving them from the Stones which fell upon their Enemies, and not upon them, though mingled with them in the Fight.

Ver. 15. *And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the Camp to Gilgal.*] The LXX. in the common Copies wholly omit this Verse; because *Joshua* did not return to *Gilgal*, till he had done what follows: And then he speaks of his Return, in the same Words and Syllables, Ver. 43. but 'tis in the Edition of *Hervæsius*, 1540. as my most learned Friend Dr. *Alix* informs me; and the Meaning of it here therefore is no more than this; that he was about to return, till he heard where the five Kings were; and that many of the Enemies were still remaining.

Ver. 16. *But these five Kings.*] Mentioned, v. 3. *Fled.*] Escaped the Sword of the *Israelites* by Flight; being provided perhaps with swift Beasts

Beasts for that Purpose ; and taking some By-ways, separate from their scattered Forces, so that the Hail-stones did not fall upon them.

And hid themselves in a Cave.] Which they knew to have secret lurking Places in it ; where they could not be easily discovered.

At Makkedab.] In the Confines of that City. Which not being yet taken, *Joshua* could not command great Stones to be rolled upon the Mouth of the Cave, if it had been in the City itself.

Ver. 17. *And it was told Joshua, saying, That the five Kings were hid in a Cave at Makkedab.]* It is likely *Joshua* had given a particular Charge about them ; and they made no Enquiry what was become of them, till it was discovered, that they were in this Place.

Ver. 18. *And Joshua said, Roll great Stones upon the Mouth of the Cave.]* To hinder their coming out.

And set Men by it for to keep them.] He ordered a Guard also, to see that none removed the Stones.

Ver. 19. *And stay you not, but pursue after your Enemies.]* They that brought this Intelligence, were, it is likely, some Officers in the Army ; whom he would not have to stop their Pursuit of the scatter'd *Canaanites*, by looking after these Kings ; but leave it to others to take Care to keep them safe shut up in the Cave.

And smite the hindermost of them.] He means, all that they could overtake in their Flight.

Suffer them not to enter into their Cities.] And hinder the rest from retreating into their own Cities ; by which means they would not remain in a Body together ; but dispersed here and there, where they could save themselves.

For the LORD your God hath delivered them into your Hand.] Given you an Opportunity to complete their Destruction.

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass, when Joshua, and the Children of Israel.] i. e.* The Children of Israel, by the Command and Direction of *Joshua* ; who sent out strong Parties to pursue them ; but he himself seems to have gone to lay Siege to *Makkedab*.

Had made an End of slaying them with a very great Slaughter, till they were consumed.] Till there was none of them to be seen in a Body together.

That the rest which remained of them, entered into fenced Cities.] Those few that escaped, got into such fortified Cities as they could reach.

Ver. 21. *And all the People.]* Who had been sent out, and engaged in Pursuit of the Enemy.

Returned to the Camp to Joshua at Makkedab.] Where, no doubt, he had order'd a general Rendezvous, as we now speak, of the whole Army that had been employed in this War.

In Peace.] The LXX. translate it *ὡς ἦν*, sound and safe ; and the Vulgar, *sani & integro numero* ; sound and without the Loss of a Man. Which is to be understood of that Detachment sent to pursue them (Ver. 19.) who came all safe to the Camp, and not a Man of them lost, or so much as wounded.

None moved his Tongue against any of the Children of Israel.] There was not so much as a Dog that barked at them. For that Word *Dog* is to be supplied (as *Bochartus* thinks) according to what we read, *Exod. xi. 7.* See *Hieroicoon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 55. It is an Expression of the great Tranquillity wherein they were, and of an entire Victory ; there being not so much as a Dog left to disturb them.

Ver. 22. *Then said Joshua, Open the Mouth of the Cave, and bring out those five Kings unto me out of the Cave.]* The Wisdom of *Joshua* is here observed by *Arias Montanus* ; who would not do this Execution till all the People were returned to the Camp, to be Witnesses of it. And he might have added, that he executed them, before he assaulted *Makkedab*, that the Inhabitants of that City might see there was no Hope of any Succour from those Kings ; who had been very powerful.

Ver. 23. *And they did so, and brought forth those five Kings unto him out of the Cave, the King of Jerusalem, the King of Hebron, &c.]* They are named in the same Order as in Ver. 3. according to their Rank and Quality ; for next to the King of Jerusalem, who was the chief, the King of Hebron seems to have been of greater Note ; and so of the rest. The same *Montanus* thinks it probable, that as they brought them forth, and set them before *Joshua*, they said, This is the King of Jerusalem ; and then, This is the King of Hebron, &c.

Ver. 24. *And it came to pass, when they brought out those Kings to Joshua, that Joshua called for all the Men of Israel.]* That is, all the Men of War.

And said unto the Captains of the Men of War, which were with him.] That is, the great Officers of the Army.

Come near, put your Feet upon the Necks of these Kings.] Who lay bound, I suppose, prostrate upon the Ground.

And they came near, and put their Feet upon the Necks of them.] Not out of Insolence and Pride ; but in token that these Kings and their Countries were brought in absolute Subjection to them ; and that God had fulfilled his Promise, *Deut. xxxiii. ult.*

Ver. 25. *And Joshua said, Fear not, nor be dismayed ; be strong, and of good Courage.]* The same that *Moses* had said to them all long ago, *Deut. i. 21, 29.* and God had lately said to *Joshua*, *i. 6, 7, 9.* and might be said with greater Reason now, when they saw their greatest Enemies lie prostrate under their Feet.

For thus shall the LORD do to all your Enemies, against whom you fight.] To all the Inhabitants of Canaan.

Ver. 26. *And afterward Joshua smote them, and slew them.]* After they had trampled upon them, he ordered them to be killed.

And hanged them on five Trees.] As a Mark of Infamy, whereby a Terror was struck into all others.

And they were hanging on the Trees till the Evening.] Exposed to this Contempt, all that long Day ; which God made on purpose that they might do all the great Things before mentioned,

tioned, and what follows, before the night came upon them. Then their Bodies were taken down, not in Honour to them, but in Honour to the Land of *Israel*, where God now dwelt. So *Aben Ezra*.

Ver. 27. *And it came to pass, at the Time of the going down of the Sun, that Joshua commanded, and they took them down off the Trees, and cast them into the Cave, wherein they had been hid, &c.]* He had given this Order as soon as they were hanged, according to the Law of *Moses*, by which he acted before at *Ai*, viii. 29. And with their Bodies he cast all the Instruments of their Punishment (the Trees, and what soever fastned them unto them) into the Cave, as *Maimonides* saith, and the *Samaritan Chronicle* here particularly observes.

Ver. 28. *And that day Joshua took Makkedab.]* The same Day the King of it was hanged; and it seems to me probable it was on that long Day (as I said before) which God made that they might compleat their Conquest of these Kings; and when they had done, take this City also. Our great Primate of *Ireland* indeed, by *that Day*, understands the same Day that he sat down before the City; which he thinks was some time after what is before related.

And smote it with the Edge of the Sword, and the King thereof he utterly destroyed.] He was slain among the rest, and not taken alive as the King of *Ai* was.

Them, and all the Souls that were therein.] All the fighting Men, together with the Women and Children; because they had refused the Offers of Peace, sent them from *Joshua*, before he invaded their Land.

He let none remain.] But saved the Cattle, which they took, with their Goods, for a Prey.

And he did to the King of Makkedab, as he did to the King of Jericho.] What he did to the King of *Jericho*, is not recorded; but by what is said of other Kings, it is probable that he hanged him up, after he was found dead.

Ver. 29. *Then Joshua passed from Makkedab.]* This only signifies what was their next Expedition; for it is likely they refreshed themselves a while, before they left this Place.

All Israel with him.] All that he brought along with him, to the Relief of *Gibeon*. See ver. 7.

Unto Libnab.] A city which fell to the Share of the Tribe of *Judah*, in the Division of the Land, xv. 42. and was one of the Cities given to the Priests, xxi. 13. 1 *Chron.* vi. 57.

And fought against Libnab.] Laid Siege to it, and planted their Batteries against it.

Ver. 30. *And the LORD delivered it also, and the King thereof, into the Hand of Israel.]* They made an easy Conquest of it, because God gave it up into their Hand.

And he smote it with the Edge of the Sword, and all the Souls that were therein, &c.] The same Words whereby the Destruction of *Makkedab* is described, ver. 28. For both these Cities favoured the five Kings before mentioned, and therefore (as *Conradus Pellicanus* thinks) were destroyed utterly, not only by the Command of God, but by the Right of War. But

the Command of God was the only Ground, as it is expressed, ver. 40.

Ver. 31. *And Joshua passed from Libnab, and all Israel with him, unto Lachish.]* Another City which fell to the Tribe of *Judah*, xv. 39. and was not far from *Libnab*.

And encamped against it, and fought against it.] This, it seems, was a stronger City than either of the former; for there is no mention of an Encampment against them before they began their Assault.

Ver. 32. *And the LORD delivered Lachish into the Hand of Israel.]* He doth not add, *and the King thereof*, as he doth of *Makkedab* and *Libnab*, (ver. 28, 30.) because he was one of the five Kings, which he had lately hang'd; and they had not, it's likely, set a new one on his Throne, ver. 23.

Which took it on the second Day.] After they began the Siege; or, the second day after the taking of *Makkedab* and *Libnab*. The former is most likely, because their Encampment against it, signifies they spent some time before it.

And smote it with the Edge of the Sword, &c.] These Words, and the following, are the very same with what he said before of the two fore-named Cities; only he doth not add, *he let none remain*; which is to be supposed.

Ver. 33. *Then Horam King of Gezer came up to help Lachish.]* This was a City afterwards in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, xvi. 10. belonging to the *Levites*, xxi. 21. and not far from *Gibeon*, as may be guessed from 1 *Chron.* xiv. 16.

And Joshua smote him and his People, until he had left him none remaining.] If he destroyed his City at this time, he returned to *Lachish*. And it is probable, he sent forth a Detachment to fight *Horam* and his Army; who having routed them, destroyed also their City; and then went on with the Siege of *Lachish*.

Ver. 24. *And from Lachish Joshua passed unto Eglon.]* Which also belonged afterward to *Judah*, xv. 39. and seems to have been as considerable as *Lachish*; for it follows, that *they encamped against it, and fought against it*, as they had done against the other. Their King was one of the five, who was killed and hanged before, ver. 23.

Ver. 35. *And they took it on that Day.]* The same Day they sat down before it; for none came to their Relief, as *Horam* did to help *Lachish*; which may be one Reason that City was not taken till the second Day, ver. 32.

And smote it with the Edge of the Sword, &c.] The same he had said of the fore-named Cities; only he saith, *he utterly destroyed all* that were therein on the same Day; which is the same with those Words, *he let none remain*.

Ver. 36. *And Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, unto Hebron, and they fought against it.]* This was also a City of *Judah* (as every one knows) xv. 54. and was seated in the mountainous Country, as the former were in the Plain; which is the Reason he is said to go up to it from *Eglon*.

Ver. 37. *And they took it, and smote it with the Edge of the Sword, and the King thereof.]* Their King was one of the five, whom *Joshua* had

had lately killed and hanged. But, it seems, they had set up a new one, being a City of great Note, which had other Cities depending on it, as it follows in the next Words.

And all the Cities thereof.] It was not only one of the Royal Cities, which had other Cities subject to it, (as Gibeon had, which was a kind of Royal City) but of very great Power. For these Words import, as if there were many Cities under its Jurisdiction.

And all the Souls that were therein, he left none remaining, &c.] In this Conquest, Caleb was very instrumental, and signalized himself (as we now speak) by driving out the three Sons of Anak (xv. 13, 14.) who were slain there, Judg. i. 10. Thus we must understand this History; or else say, as some do, either that Joshua only took the City and destroyed it, but could not take the Citadel, or strong Fort on the Top of the Mountain, (which doth not seem to be exactly true, for we read in the next Chapter, Ver. 21, 22. that he cut off the Anakims from the Mountains, &c.) or that, after he had destroyed it, as is here related, the Anakims came from Gaza and other Cities of the Philistines, whither they now fled, and peopled it again; but were expelled again by Caleb, as some understand, xiv. 12. See Judg. i. 10.

Ver. 38. *And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to Debir, and fought against it.]* He had not been there before, but having gone as far South and West as he thought fit, (even as far as Gaza, which was in the Western Coast, ver. 41.) he turned his Course toward the Camp at Gilgal, which was now North-East from him, and in his Way thither took Debir, which also was a City of Judah, xv. 49. and one of the Cities of the Priests, xxi. 15. 1 Chron. vi. 58. called also Kiriath-Sepher, and Kiriath-Sanna.

Ver. 39. *And he took it, and the King thereof and all the Cities thereof, &c.]* It was a great City (we may gather from hence, like to Hebron) in the Conquest of which Othniel the Brother of Caleb did great Service; and therefore it was given to him; as we read, xv. 15, 16, 17, and Judg. i. 11.

Ver. 40. *So Joshua smote all the Country of the Hills, and of the South, and of the Vale, and of the Springs, and all their Kings.]* He forbears to name all the Cities he took, and, in short, saith he subdued the whole Country that lay South and West (as it is explained in the next Verse) of whatsoever sort it was; both the Hilly and the Low Country: For they that describe Countries, are wont to have respect to two Things; the Condition and Quality of the Soil, and then the Situation: The first of these he expresses in this Verse; and the other in the next. For here he describes it as partly hilly and dry; and partly plain and full of Springs.

He left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed.] Which must be restrained to Mankind; for they kept their Cattle as a Prey to themselves.

As the Lord God of Israel commanded.] This is added as a Justification of the Israelites, from all Imputation of Cruelty or Severity; for they

only executed a Divine Sentence against this People for their abominable Wickedness, (Levit. xviii. 24, 25, &c.) wherewith the Israelites would have been in danger to be infected, if they had not been extirpated.

Ver. 41. *And Joshua smote them from Kadesh-Barnea.]* Which was in the South of Canaan, as appears from Numb. xxxiv. 4. and Chap. xv. of this Book, ver. 3. where it is mentioned as belonging to the Tribe of Judah.

Even unto Gaza.] A city of the Philistines, in the West Part of Canaan, towards the South.

And all the Country of Goshen.] There was a City in the Tribe of Judah of this Name, which lay in the Mountains, as Hebron did, in the Southern Part of the Country, xv. 51. From which City, the Region thereabouts was called the Country of Goshen: Which had excellent Pasture-Ground in it, and was well watered, (like that Country in Egypt of the same Name) and thence was called Goshen, as Conradus Pellicanus conjectures; because the Hebrew Word Goshen signifies large Showers, which make the Earth fruitful.

Even unto Gibeon.] Which was in the more Northerly Part of the Country. And therefore as before he gave an Account of his Conquest from the South to the West; so here of his Conquest from the South to the North.

Ver. 42. *All these Kings, and their Land did Joshua take at one Time.]* In one Expedition.

Because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel.] Which made their Conquest easy and speedy. The Targum hath it, *The Lord God of Israel, by his Word, fought for Israel.* That is by him who appeared to Joshua as the Captain of the Lord's Hosts, ver. 13, 14.

Ver. 43. *And Joshua returned, and Israel with him, unto the Camp to Gilgal.]* To refresh themselves with the Company of their Wives and Children; and to make those who were left to defend them Partakers of their Booty; but especially to return solemn Thanks to God for their Victories, at his House, which was now settled at Gilgal.

Our great Primate of Ireland thinks, that this War with the five Kings, that came against Gibeon, &c. concludes this famous Year. In the first Part of which, Moses took the Kingdoms of Sihon and Og on the other Side Jordan; and in the latter Part of it Joshua conquered a great Part of the Land of Canaan; and in the middle of it the Manna ceased, and they eat of the Fruit of the Country. So that in the Autumn of this Year they began to sow, and consequently, from this Time, they began to number their Sabbatical Years. See him in his Annales, A. M. 2554. But another great Man (Dr. Alix) admonishes me, that this is against the Opinion of the antient Jews, who suppose that the first Year of the Semitah was the fourteenth after their Entrance into Canaan: For the Land must have been divided, before it was cultivated; and so the Sabbath of the Land must be seven Years after the Division.

C H A P. XI.

Ver. 1. **A**ND it came to pass, that when *Jabin King of Hazor.*] This City was the Metropolis of the Northerly Part of *Canaan*, ver. 10. and fell to the Share of the Tribe of *Naphtali* in the Division of the Land, xix. 36. *Jabin* was the Name of the King of the *Canaanites* in this Part of the Country in future Times; and reigned in this very City, *Judg.* iv. 2.

Heard of these Things.] Of the Conquest *Joshua* had made of so many Kings, and their Kingdoms, in the South and the West Part of the Land.

That he sent to Jobab King of Madon.] This is the Name of a Place we read of no where else; but was subject, no doubt, unto *Hazor* as the rest where.

And the King of Shimron.] A Place afterward in the Tribe of *Zebulun*, near to the Country of *Naphtali*, xix. 15.

And to the King of Achshaph.] In the Tribe of *Asher*, xix. 25. These two last Places *Arias Montanus* thinks were more remote from *Hazor*, than *Madon*; and lay toward the South near *Mount Tabor*; being the only Southern People that remained, after the five Kings were destroyed. But toward the North, and the East, and the West, there were many still left; whom *Jabin* now gathered together.

Ver. 2. *And to the Kings that were in the North of the Mountains.*] Or, mountainous-Country, near *Lebanon*; for that was in the North Part of *Canaan*.

And in the Plains, South of Cinneroth.] In the flat Country, which lay South of the Lake called afterward *Genesaret*, now *Cinneroth*. See *Numb.* xxxiv. 11.

And in the Valley.] Some conjecture he means that pleasant Valley between *Mount Hermon*, and *Mount Gilboa*; called the Valley of *Jezreel*.

And the Borders of Dor.] A City, with a Country belonging to it, in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, xvii. 11.

On the West.] Upon the Midland Sea. Where *Josephus* mentions (in his second Book against *Appion*) a City called *Dora*, near *Mount Carmel*. See *Bochartus* in his *Canaan*, Lib. 1. Cap. 41. P. 752.

Ver. 3. *And to the Canaanites.*] The People peculiarly so called.

On the East, and on the West.] It hath been noted before, that some of this People lived in the East near *Jordan*; and other of them in the West near the Midland Sea. See *Numb.* xiii. 29.

And to the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite.] There were other *Amorites* scattered up and down the Country, besides those who were subject to the five Kings mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, ver. 5. who were all now assembled together by *Jabin*; with the rest of the *Hittites* and *Perizzites*, (who were in several Parts of the Country) that they might make as powerful an Army as could be raised.

VOL. II.

And the Jebusite, in the Mountains.] About *Jerusalem* where they kept a strong Hold, till the Time of *David*; as the *Perizzites* lived in other mountainous and woody Countries as *Bochartus* observes.

And to the Hivite under Hermon.] This was a Mountain in the North-East Part of the Country, where some *Hivites* were settled, as others were about *Gibeon*. That *Hermon* was Easterly appears from *Psal.* lxxxix. 12. Whence it is that the *Hivites* are called *Kadmonites*, that is, *Easterlings*, *Gen.* xv. 19. as *Bochart* hath observed in his *Phaleg*. Lib. 4. Cap. 36. and in his *Canaan*, Lib. 1. Cap. 19.

In the Land of Mizpeh.] There were several Cities of this Name; one in the Tribe of *Judah* xv. 38. another belonging to *Benjamin*, xviii. 26. and two more beyond *Jordan* in the Land of *Gilead*; one in the Tribe of *Gad*, the other in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, or very near it; which gave Name to the Country about it and seems to be here intended.

Ver. 4. *And they went out.*] The Kings of all these People.

They and all their Host with them, much People even as the Sand that is upon the Sea shore in Multitude.] A vast Army, which could not easily be numbered; or, which covered the Place where they were encamped, as Sand doth the Sea-shore; so that nothing could be seen but armed Men, Horses, and Chariots, &c. It is a proverbial Speech in Scripture, for vast Numbers of Men or great Quantities of Corn; or exceeding much Knowledge and Wisdom, as every one knows.

With Horses and Chariots, very many.] This made them the more formidable, because the *Israelites* were all Footmen; who might easily be beaten by a strong Body of Horse; especially when they had Chariots also, which carried Men in them (see upon *Deut.* xx. 1.) and they had great Numbers also of them, as these Words intimate. *Josephus* makes their Chariots alone to have been twenty Thousand. The Land of *Canaan* indeed did not breed Horses (as I have often observed) but they might easily procure them out of *Egypt*, and they trusted much to this kind of Forces, wherein the *Egyptians* excelled most People. See *Deut.* xvii. 16.

Ver. 5. *And when all these Kings were met together.*] In some Place which the King of *Hazor* appointed for a general Rendezvous. For tho' this Multitude were of different Nations, yet they all now combined against the *Israelites*. But it was a great Providence of *God*, that as all this Country was not united under one Head, but divided into several petty Kingdoms; so they did not all enter into a Confederacy at the first against *Joshua*, but fought severally; only five of their Kings joining together. Tho' now they seem to have seen their Error; and therefore, all that remained, joined, as one Man, to oppose *Joshua's* further Proceeding.

They came, and pitched together at the Waters of Merom, to fight against Israel.] They marched to these Waters, and there formed a Camp, to prepare, and set themselves in Order, to give *Israel* Battle. These Waters, all agree, were that Lake which *Josephus* calls Σάμα χωνίτιδα, from

from the Abundance of Fishes that were in it: For *Samachon*, or *Semechon*, in the *Arabick* Language, signifies a Fish (as *Bochart* observes in his *Hieroicoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 1. Cap. 6.) and *Joshua* here calls the Waters of *Merom*, that is, the *upper Waters*; for this Lake was near the Fountain of *Jordan*, which ran thro' the Lake of *Tiberias*, and fell into the Lake *Asphaltites*, or the Dead Sea. With respect to which Waters, these were called the *upper*, they being *lower*. And here they pitched rather than any other Place; being under the Jurisdiction of *Jabin*, who had called them together: For *Hazor*, where he reigned, was situate upon this Lake, as *Josephus* tells us, Lib. 5. *Antiq.* Cap. 6.

Ver. 6. *And the LORD said unto Joshua.*] Who went, it is probable, (as he had done formerly, x. 8.) to consult the Divine Majesty, how he should manage himself upon this great Occasion.

Be not afraid of them.] Some collect from hence (even *Josephus* himself) that *Joshua* was possessed with some Fear, when he heard of such a numerous Army, and so well appointed, coming against him. But I do not think it at all probable, that after so many late Assurances and signal Demonstrations, as God had given him of his Presence with him in this War, he should be capable of this Passion. See the first Chapter of this Book, ver. 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, iii. 7, 9, 10. v. 13, 14, 15. x. 8. Therefore these Words were spoken to him, that he might animate the People, whose Hearts were apt to fail them, when they saw such terrible Enemies.

For to-morrow about this time.] It is not certain what this time was; but it is likely in the Morning, after he had marched all Night (as he did against the five Kings, x. 9.) that he might fall upon them unexpectedly.

I will deliver them up all slain before Israel.] The LXX translate it *τελοπωμένους*, *put to flight*. Which agrees with what follows; for it is certain they were not all *slain*, but many of them fled, and the *Israelites* pursued them: And therefore other Copies of the LXX have it *τελωμένους*, *wounded*; so broken and shattered, that they were all in effect dead Men.

Thou shalt hough their Horses.] Cut their Hamstrings, and thereby render them unfit for future Service.

And burn their Chariots with Fire.] That they might be no more used; no not by the *Israelites* themselves.

Ver. 7. *And Joshua came, and all the People of War with him, against them, to the Waters of Merom.*] He did not wait for their Motion; but attacked them as they lay in their Quarters; for that is signified by the next Word.

Suddenly.] When they thought not of an Enemy near them; but were consulting, perhaps, how to manage the War against the *Israelites*.

And they fell upon them.] When they were unprovided to make such Resistance as they would have done, if they had been ready to receive them.

Ver. 8. *And the LORD delivered them into the Hand of Israel, who smote them.*] Routed and killed a great many of them.

And chased them to Great Zidon.] This, it seems, was a large City, and of great Note in those Days, (for there was no *Zidon* the Less) built by the eldest Son of *Canaan* (as *Josephus* thinks) from whom it had its Name. See *Gen.* x. 15. It lay in the North-West Part of *Canaan*, upon the Sea.

And unto Misraphothmaim.] It is thought by some that this was a Place where there were *hot Waters*; which I shall not examine; but only note, it is a probable Conjecture, from xiii. 6. that it was a Place in the Country of *Zidon*, where they made Salt.

Unto the Valley of Mizpeh Eastward.] (See ver. 3.) This signifies, that in their Confusion, some of them fled Westward to *Zidon* and *Misraphothmaim*, and others Eastward, towards *Mispeh*.

And they smote them till they left them none remaining.] As they divided themselves, and fled several ways; so did the *Israelites* send out several Parties, both to the West, and to the East; who pursued them so close, that they let not a Man of them escape.

Ver. 9. *And Joshua did unto them as the LORD bad him; he houghed their Horses, and burnt their Chariots with Fire.*] We do not read, as *Kimchi* notes upon this Place, of any Horses or Chariots which the five Kings mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, brought into the Field; because they went only to besiege *Gibeon*, and hoped to take it presently by an Assault; in which there was no Use of Horses and Chariots; which they did not want, no more than these Kings, who abounded in them, and placed their principal Confidence in their Horsemen and Chariots. Which was the Reason God commanded them to hough their Horses; that is, to cut their Nerves and Sinews in their Hams; which *Josephus* translates *ἀχέσας ποιεῖν*, to make them useless and unprofitable: For God would not have his People place their Safety and Security in this, but in himself alone, as good People always did, *Psal.* xx. 7. Accordingly, when *David* had conquered *Hadedezar*, and taken from him a great Number of Horses and Chariots, he disabled all the Horses, after this Example of *Joshua*, (as if God intended by him to teach all future Rulers of his People what to do) reserving only as many as would serve for an Hundred Chariots, 2 *Sam.* viii. 4. And *Schickardus* observes out of the *Jewish* Authors, that they were wont thus to enervate all the Horses they found in the King's Stables after his Death, that they might not be of use to his Successor. See his *Mishpat Hammelech*, Cap. 6. Theorm. 19. and *Bochart's Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 11.

Ver. 10. *And Joshua at that time.*] Before he thought of returning to his Camp at *Gilgal*.

Turned back.] From pursuing those that fled toward the Western Coast.

And took Hazor.] Which was in the Eastern Part of the Country; upon the Lake before mentioned.

And smote the King thereof with the Sword.] This was one Reason, it is likely, why he made haste to invest *Hazor*; because the King thereof,

who was the chief Author of this War, had escaped out of the Battle, and thought to defend himself there.

For Hazor before-time was the Head of all those Kingdoms.] Not of all the Kingdoms of Canaan; but of all those mentioned in the beginning of this Chapter. Which was another Reason why he fell upon it *at this Time*; that by taking the most considerable City of this Part of Canaan, all the rest might be dishearten'd to hold out against him.

Ver. 11. *And they smote all the Souls that were therein with the Edge of the Sword, utterly destroying them; there was not any left to breathe.]* See x. 40.

And he burnt Hazor with Fire.] Which the Canaanites afterwards rebuilt, and possessed it for some time; another King of the same Name reigning in it, *Judg. iv. 2.* For the Kings of this City were called *Jabin* in many Successions, as the Egyptian Kings were called *Pharaoh*, and the Kings of the Philistines, *Abimelech*, &c.

Ver. 12. *And all the Cities of those Kings, and all the Kings of them, did Joshua take.]* Viz. Those mentioned Ver. 2, 3. whom *Jabin* drew into Confederacy with him; and perhaps were his Dependants.

And smote them with the Edge of the Sword, and he utterly destroyed them.] That is, all their Inhabitants.

As Moses the Servant of the LORD commanded.] Deut. vii. 2. and many other Places.

Ver. 13. *But as for the Cities that stood still in their Strength.]* The Hebrew Words *all thil-lam* (which we translate *in their Strength*) literally signify *on their Heap*, as it is noted in the Margin of our Bibles; that is, were seated in an eminent Place, and therefore of greater Strength than those that stood in the Plain. Thus *Bochart* interprets it in his *Canaan*, Lib. 1. Cap. 29. from whence he thinks came the Names of *The-lassar*, 2 Kings xix. 12. and of *Thelabib*, Ezek. iii. 15. And thus I observe the Prophet *Jeremiab* speaks, xxx. 18. *Jerusalem shall be built on her own Heap*, or high Hill. But the Meaning may be, according to our Translation, the Cities whose Walls were not battered down in the taking of them.

Israel burnt none of them.] Because they intended to dwell in them; and would not be at the Charge and Pains of building new Walls for their Safety.

But Hazor only, that did Joshua burn.] Because it was the capital City, and began this War against them; which being laid desolate by the *Israelites*, without Inhabitant, the *Canaanites* took their Opportunity to rebuild it, and settle themselves there again.

Ver. 14. *And all the Spoil of these Cities, and the Cattle, the Children of Israel took for a Prey unto themselves.]* As the LORD allowed them to do at *Ai*, viii. 2.

But every Man they smote with the Edge of the Sword, until they had destroyed them, &c.] Because God had often commanded these Nations should be rooted out for their abominable Wickedness; lest the *Israelites* should be drawn in to imitate them in their filthy Lewd-

ness, as I observed from *Lev. xviii. 24, 25, 26, &c.* See also *xx. 22, 23, &c.*

Ver. 15. *As the LORD commanded Moses his Servant.]* *Exod. xxxiv. 11, 12, &c.*

So did Moses command Joshua.] *Numb. xxvi. 19. Deut. xxxi. 7.*

And so did Joshua, he left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses.] Which is a Demonstration that *Moses* left in Writing what we read the LORD commanded in the foregoing Books, and that they were not written (as some pretend) in later Times: For then it would have been impossible for *Joshua* to have executed every thing that he commanded, unless he had had the Book of the Law before him for his Direction. But so desirous are some Men to weaken the Authority of these holy Books, that from hence they argue this Book of *Joshua* could not be written by himself, but some other; because he gives himself this high Commendation. So the Author of *Theolog. Polit.* who by the same Reason might have rejected *S. Paul's* Epistles as none of his, and *Cæsar's* Commentaries; for both of them relate their own Vertues, and the noble Things they did.

Ver. 16. *And Joshua took all that Land.]* Belonging to the Kings before mentioned.

The Hills, and all the South Country, and all the Land of Goshen, and the Valley, and the Plain.] This is a Description of his whole Conquest, as appears from x. 40.

The Mountain of Israel.] It is very uncertain what Place this was; but many think it probable to be *Beth-el*: Where God appeared to *Jacob* as he went to *Padan Aram*, and promised to give him this Land, *Gen. xxviii. 12, 13.* and where he dwelt, by God's Direction, after he came from *Padan Aram*, and God appeared again to him there, and made him the same Promise, and changed his Name from *Jacob* to *Israel*, *Gen. xxxv. 1, 9, 10, &c.*

And the same of the Valley.] Belonging to the same Mountain. But *Conradus Pellicanus* thinks the Singular Number is put for the Plural; and thus explains the whole Verse. The Land of *Israel* was partly in the Hill-Country, partly in the South towards *Egypt*, partly in the Plain near the Great Sea, and the Sea of *Sodom*, and the Spring of *Jordan*, near *Tabor* in *Galilee*. And moreover, the Mountains of *Israel* were the two *Carmels*, *Hermon*, *Gilead*, *Lebanus*, those about *Jerusalem*, and many other.

Ver. 17. *Even from the Mount Halach.]* Or the *Stony Mountain*, as *Bochart* interprets it, Lib. 1. *Canaan*, Cap. 5.

That goeth up to Mount Seir.] Which was the Bounds of the Country of *Edom*.

Even unto Baal-Gad, in the Valley of Lebanon, under Mount Hermon.] As in the foregoing Words he expresses the Bounds of *Joshua's* Conquest Southward; so hither they reached Northward. And this seems to be a Description of the Length of the Country which he took from the King of *Hazor*, and all those that joined with him, as *Archbishop Usher* understands it.

And all their Kings he took, and smote them and slew them.] So that none appeared to make head against him.

Ver. 18. *Joshua made War a long Time with all those Kings.]* But those Kings were so many, and made such great Opposition, that he spent Six Years (as the fore-named great Person computes) in this War, before he could finish it.

Ver. 19. *There was not a City that made Peace with the Children of Israel.]* This is the Reason the War continued so long; because there was but one City that surrendered on such Terms as had been offered them; but all the rest obstinately refused to yield unto Joshua.

Save only the Hivites, the Inhabitants of Gibeon.] viii. 3. Who, if they had truly discovered who they were, (which out of Fear they concealed) and begged Peace, they might have obtained it on such Conditions as were proposed to all.

All other they took in Battle.] By Force of Arms.

Ver. 20. *For it was of the LORD to barden their Hearts, that they should come against Israel in Battle.]* Being a People obstinately wicked, God ordered Things so in his Providence, that they were emboldened (notwithstanding the Wonders they had certainly heard were done for Israel) to fight with them. By which it appears the Gibeonites were a better sort of People, who considered what God had done in Favour of the Israelites.

That he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no Favour.] Which they might have found, if they had not been so fool-hardy (as we speak) as to imagine they could withstand those, before whom the River Jordan fled, and the Walls of Jericho fell down flat.

But that he might destroy them as the LORD commanded Moses.] In many Places; particularly in Deut. vii. 2. xx. 16, 17.

Ver. 21. *And at that Time.]* That is, in the War before-mentioned, and perhaps in the Conclusion of it; after he had left none to oppose him in other Places, but only in those mountainous Countries, which were of difficult Access.

Came Joshua.] Either from the Camp at Gilgal, or from destroying the Kings and their Countries, of which he had been speaking in this Chapter.

And cut off the Anakims.] Who were a distinct People (*Arias Montanus* thinks) from the Canaanites; of a fierce, cruel, and tyrannical Disposition, who oppressed all their Neighbours.

From the Mountains.] Where they had settled, and, it is likely, strongly fortified themselves: Which moved Joshua to let them alone till he had finished his other Conquests. Concerning these Anakims, see Numb. xiii. 22, 23.

From Hebron.] Called also *Kiriath-Arba*, the City of *Arba*, who was a great Man among the Anakims. See *Bochartus* in his *Canaan*, Lib. 1. Cap. 1. P. 363.

And Debir.] Called also *Kiriath-Sepher*, as I noted before.

And Anab.] This, as well as the two fore-named Cities, fell to the Tribe of Judah, xv. 50.

And from all the Mountains of Judah.] All the mountainous Country which afterward fell by Lot to that Tribe.

And from all the Mountains of Israel.] All the mountainous Country, which was in the rest of the Tribes of Israel, where these People, it is likely, fled for Safety.

Joshua destroyed them utterly, with their Cities.] Which it seems they had in those mountainous Countries of Israel; besides Hebron, Debir, and Anab in the Tribe of Judah.

Ver. 22. *There were none of the Anakims left in the Land of the Children of Israel.]* He rooted them out of the whole Country which the Israelites conquered.

Only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod, there remained.] Three Cities of the Philistines; unto which either some of them escaped, and there took Shelter, or they had been there from antient time, and the Israelites could not yet expel them. For they did not possess themselves of the Country of the Philistines till the Time of David; when we find some of these Giants still there; particularly in Gath. But that there were any of them at Ascalon, the famous *Bochart* shews to be an Error in the Place above-mentioned. Lib. 1. *Canaan*, Cap. 1.

Ver. 23. *So Joshua took the whole Land.]* Which either the Canaanites, or the Anakims possessed; that is, subdued it so, that none rose up against him, though many Places were not yet in the Possession of the Israelites. See xiii. 1, 2, &c. For which were many Reasons; one of which was, because the Israelites were not yet so many as to be able to people the whole Country, and keep the Beasts of the Field from multiplying upon them, *Exod.* xxiii. 29. And two more Reasons are added, *Judg.* iii. 1, 4.

According to all that the LORD said unto Moses.] Deut. xxxi. 7, 8.

And Joshua gave it for an Inheritance unto Israel.] Deut. iii. 28.

According to their Divisions by their Tribes.] Numb. xxvi. 53. Numb. xxxiii. 54.

And the Land rested from War] None of the Lords of the Philistines, or any other, adventured to give any Disturbance to the Israelites in their Possessions; but they enjoyed them quietly. And thereby had Liberty to make a Division of the Country; which God ordered them to go about, Chap. xiii.

Now began the seventh Year from the time the Israelites first ploughed and sowed in the Land. And therefore was the first *Sabbatical* Year that they observed after Joshua had brought them to their Rest in the Land of Promise. An Emblem (as our great Primate of Ireland observes) of that eternal *Sabbatism*, or Rest, unto which the true Jesus will bring his People, *Hebr.* iv. 8, 9. And from this time they were to reckon, unto their *Jubilee* mentioned, *Levit.* xxv. 8, 13. But that was not from their Entrance into Canaan, but from the seventh Year after the Division of the Land, as I observed before, upon the last Verse of the tenth Chapter.

C H A P. XII.

Verse 1. **N**OW these are the Kings of the Land, which the Children of Israel smote, and possessed their Land.] Before he gives an Account of the Division of the Land, he thinks fit to lay before every one's Eyes, as in a Table, the Land they had conquered; which was to be divided.

On the other Side Jordan towards the Rising of the Sun.] There they began their Conquests, before they passed over Jordan.

From the River Arnon, unto Mount Hermon.] So the Bounds of this Conquest are described by Moses, Deut. iii. 8. iv. 48. See there.

And all the Plain on the East.] That is, on the East of Jordan, Deut. i. 1. called the Plain of Moab, Deut. xxxiv. 1.

Ver. 2. Sibon King of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon.] He was the first King whose Land they conquered and possessed. See Numb. xxi.

And ruled from Aroer, which is upon the Banks of the River Arnon.] See Numb. xxi. 24.

And from the Middle of the River.] In which stood the City called Aroer. For Ar never was in the Hands of Sibon; but his Kingdom was bounded by it, on that Side. See Deut. ii. 36. iii. 16.

And from half Gilead,] In the Hebrew, and half of Gilead; there being nothing to answer to the Word from: Which being left out, the Sense is plain, that half of the Country of Gilead belonged to Sibon, as the other half did to Og, Ver. 5.

To the River Jabbok, which is the Border of the Children of Ammon.] Thus his Country is constantly described; particularly in Numb. xxi. 24. Deut. iii. 16.

Ver. 3. And from the Plain, &c.] There is nothing answering to the Word from in the Hebrew; which may most clearly be translated, and the Plain: And so the LXX. only retaining the Word Araba, which we translate Plain. This was another Part of Sibon's Country, a great Plain, which lay Eastward of the Sea of Cinneroth, and the Salt Sea; by which it was bounded on the West.

The Way to Beth-Jeshimoth.] Which, by the next Words, is thought to have lain towards the South.

And from the South under Ashdod-Pisgab.] The Meaning seems to be, that on the South it was bounded by Ashdod-Pisgab. See Deut. iii. 17. I do but touch these Things, leaving them to a very learned Friend and Brother of mine, who hath most accurately considered every Part and Place of this Country.

Ver. 4. And the Coast of Og King of Basban.] The next Conquest they made was of the Kingdom of Og, who was of the Remnant of the Giants. See Deut. iii. 11.

That dwelt at Ashtaroth and Edrei.] See Deut. i. 4. Some would gather from this Place, and from xiii. 12. that he had two Royal Seats, one at Ashtaroth, another at Edrei; and that he lived sometimes in the one, and sometimes in the other.

Ver. 5. And reigned in Mount Hermon.] At the bottom of which some other People lived, who were conquered by Joshua, xi. 17.

And in Salcab.] This was one of his Cities, in that Part of his Kingdom, which was next to Hermon, as some conjecture from xiii. 12. But others think it was in the Southern Part of this Country, possessed afterwards by the Gadites; which they gather from 1 Chron. v. 11, 12, 16.

And all Basban, unto the Border, &c.] See an Account of this, and of all that follows in this Verse, Deut. iii. 13, 14.

Ver. 6. Them did Moses the Servant of the LORD, and the Children of Israel, smite.] These two Kings were conquered by Moses, before they came into Canaan, Numb. xxi.

And Moses the Servant of the LORD gave it for a Possession to the Reubenites, and Gadites, and the half Tribe of Manasseh.] See Numb. xxxii. and Deut. iii. 12. xiii. 8. He gives Moses the Title of the Servant of the LORD twice in this Verse, to make them sensible that this War against the two Kings before-named, was made by Divine Authority; and that their Land was afterward given to the Reubenites, &c. by the same Authority.

Ver. 7. And these are the Kings.] They that follow in the rest of the Chapter.

Of the Country, which Joshua and the Children of Israel smote on this Side Jordan.] In the late Wars, before mentioned in this Book.

On the West.] Westward of Jordan.

From Baal-Gad in the Valley of Lebanon, even unto the Mount Halak, which goeth up to Seir.] This was the Northern and Southern Bounds of the Country of these Kings. See xi. 17.

Which Joshua gave unto the Tribes of Israel for a Possession, according to their Divisions.] Unto the rest of the Tribes who had not their Share on the other Side Jordan, xi. 33.

Ver. 8. In the Mountains, and in the Valleys, and in the Plains.] This is a Description of the Condition of the Country; in which Valleys and Plains differ only in this, that the former were such as lay between Mountains, and the latter, the flat Country, which was remote from Mountains.

And in the Springs.] Which commonly were at the Foot of Mountains.

And in the Wilderness, and in the South Country.] These are joined together, because their Wildernesses were Southerly, in the hottest and driest Part of the Land: Whereby we are not to understand Countries without People; but that were thinly peopled, in Comparison with other Parts of the Land. For we read of Houses and Towns in the Wilderness, 1 Kings xi. 34. ix. 18.

The Hivites, the Amorites, and the Canaanites, &c.] This may relate either to the Kings, or the Countries fore-mentioned.

Ver. 9. The King of Jericho one.] He is first mentioned, because first conquered.

The King of Ai.] He was the next.

Which is beside Beth-el, one.] The People of which Place came to assist the King of Ai; and were conquered at the same time, viii. 17.

Ver. 10. *The King of Jerusalem, one.*] Who was the next that opposed *Joshua*, and therefore next mentioned, x. 1.

The King of Hebron, one.] He, and the three next, the Kings of *Farmuth*, *Lachish*, and *Eglon* (Ver. 11, 12.) joined with the King of *Jerusalem*, and were vanquished at the same time.

Ver. 12. *The King of Gezer, one.*] He came out to help *Lachish*, and was smitten at the same time, x. 33.

Ver. 13. *The King of Debir, one.*] Mentioned x. 38.

The King of Geder, one.] We read not of him before ; but we find several Towns in the Tribe of *Judah*, of the same or neighbouring Name, viz. *Gederah*, and *Gederoth*, and *Gederothaim*, and *Geder*, xv. 36, 41, 56. 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 18. All which, as *Bochartus* observes, have their Name à *Sepimento*, from the Fence that was about them, Lib. 1. *Canaan*, Cap. 36.

Ver. 14. *The King of Hormah, one ; the King of Arad, one.*] We have no Mention of these Kings before ; but we know that *Hormah* was a City in the Tribe of *Judah*, xv. 30. *Judg.* i. 17. 1 *Sam.* xxx. 30. and afterwards given to *Simeon*, *Josh.* xix. 4. *Arad* also was a Place in the Tribe of *Judah*, as appears by the Story in *Judg.* i. 16.

Ver. 15. *The King of Libnah, one.*] Mentioned before, x. 29.

The King of Adullam, one.] This was a City in the same Tribe of *Judah*, xv. 35. 1 *Sam.* xxii. 1.

Ver. 16. *The King Makkedah, one.*] See x. 26.

The King of Beth-el, one.] We read not of any King here before ; but it seems there was one, depending upon *Ai*, viii. 17.

Ver. 17. *And the King of Tappuah, one.*] There were two Cities of this Name ; one in the Tribe of *Judah*, xv. 34. the other in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, xvii. 8. It is probable the latter is here meant ; because the King of it is mentioned next to the King of *Beth-el*, which was in the Confines of *Benjamin* and *Ephraim*. And immediately follows the King of *Hepher* ; which was a Place not far off, in the Tribe of *Zebulun*.

The King of Hepher, one.] We read of the *Land of Hepher*, in 1 *Kings* iv. 10. Which St. *Hierom* saith was in the Tribe of *Zebulun*, near *Sephorim*, or *Diocæsarea*.

Ver. 18. *The King of Aphek.*] There were two *Apheks* in this Country which *Joshua* conquered ; one in the Tribe of *Judah*, xiii. 53. 1 *Sam.* ix. 1. xxix. 1. another in the Tribe of *Asher*, *Josh.* xix. 53. Which of them is here intended, cannot certainly be determined.

The King of Lassaron, one.] This Place is never named any where else in Scripture. But I take it for *Saron* (as the *Vulgar Latin* here doth, leaving out the first Syllable) which was a City near *Lydda*, as we learn from *Acts* ix. 35. And the Country about it was very pleasant and fruitful, *Isai.* xxxiii. 9 xxxv. 2. There was another *Saron* also on the other Side of *Jordan* in the East, in the Country of the *Gadites*, 1 *Chron.* v. 16. of which some think the Prophet *Isaiab* speaks, lxxv. 10.

Ver. 19. *The King of Madon one ; the King of Hazor, one.*] Both these are mentioned before, as conquered by *Joshua*, xi. 1.

Ver. 20. *The King of Shimron-Meron, one ; the King of Achshaph, one.*] These two are mentioned in the same Place, xi. 1. And *Shimron* was in the Tribe of *Zebulun* ; and *Achshaph* in the Tribe of *Asher*, xix. 15, 25. The former hath the Addition of *Meron* to it in this Place, to distinguish it from some other *Shimron* ; which some think was in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, called *Shomeron*, or *Samaria*.

Ver. 21. *The King of Tanaach, one.*] A City given to the Tribe of *Manasseh*, xvii. 11. any in the Confines of *Zebulun*. It belonged to the *Levites*, xxi. 25. But the old Inhabitants were not expelled out of it, *Judg.* i. 27.

The King of Megiddo, one.] This City fell to the same Tribe, as we read in the same Place ; and was near the River *Kishon* ; as may be gathered from *Judg.* v. 19. The *Canaanites* were not driven out of this City, *Judg.* i. 27.

Ver. 22. *The King of Kedesh, one.*] There were two Cities called *Kedesh* or *Kadish* ; one in the Tribe of *Judah*, xv. 23. the other in the Tribe of *Naphtali*, xix. 37. The latter is here meant ; for it was a fenced City, as we read there ; but the other was of no Note.

The King of Jokneam of Carmel, one.] A City in the Tribe of *Zebulun*, at the Bottom of Mount *Carmel*, near the River *Belus*, xix. 11. and one of the Cities of the *Levites*, xxi. 34. It had its Name from its delightful Situation, as *Bochart* conjectures, Lib. 1. *Canaan*, Cap. 28.

Ver. 23. *The King of Dor, in the Coast of Dor, one.*] A City in the Lot of the Tribe of *Manasseh*, xvii. 11. which had a large Territory belonging to it, called after its Name : For it was a Royal City, and one of the most ancient in *Phœnicia*, as *Bochart* observes. So strong also, that the *Israelites* could not get Possession of it (or could not keep out the ancient Inhabitants) when it fell to the Portion of *Manasseh*, *Judg.* i. 27. Nor could *Antiochus Sidetes*, in future Times, take it, tho' he laid Siege to it with a very great Army, Lib. 1. *Canaan*, Cap. 41.

The King of the Nations of Gilgal, one.] This *Gilgal* is not the Place where *Joshua* encamped when he came over *Jordan* ; for there was no City there, nor any King of that Country, but the King of *Jericho*. That Place also had its Name from the Circumcision of the *Israelites* there, Ver. 9. We have no Mention indeed of any other *Gilgal* in Scripture ; but St. *Hierom* says, in his Time, there was a Place called *Gilgel*, about six Miles from *Antipatris*, which was near the Sea, not far from *Joppa*. Hither, it is likely, Merchants from several Countries resorted ; and thence the chief Ruler there was called *the King of the Nations of Gilgal*. Some finding Mention of *Galilee of the Nations*, fancy that it is the Place here meant. But that Name for some Part of *Galilee*, was not known in the Days of *Joshua* ; being occasioned by *Solomon's* giving *Hiram* twenty Towns in this Country, 1 *Kings* ix. 11. So the same St. *Hierom*.

Ver. 24. *The King of Tirzah, one.*] It is not certain in what Part of the Country this City was; but it is very probable, in the Lot of the Tribe of *Ephraim*. For *Jeroboam* (who was of this Tribe) and his Successors, made it the Royal Seat, until the Building of *Samaria*, 1 Kings xiv. 17. xvi. 23, 24.

All the Kings thirty and one.] Some cannot believe, that in so small a Country, there were so many Kings. But they should consider, that these Kings were only petty Princes, or Lords of Cities; which had a few Villages depending on them, the Inhabitants of which were their Tenants. This appears by ver. 9. where we read of the King of *Beth-el*; which was so small a Place, that he and the King of *Ai*, joined together, had but twelve thousand Subjects, viii. 25. For Kingdoms, like all other Things, were antiently very small in their Beginning. See upon *Gen.* xiv. 1. and *Grotius* upon the first Verse of this Chapter; and *Masius* upon the seventh. Unto which may be added that *Cæsar* in his fifth Book of his Commentaries speaks of four Kings here in the County of *Kent* alone: How many then was there in all *Britain*? For it appears by *Tacitus*, that the *Silures* and the *Brigantes* had their own Kings also. And *Cæsar* informs us, that in *France* there were as many Kings as Princes; and so it was in *Spain*, as *Livy* writes. And *Vopiscus*, in the Life of the Emperor *Probus*, relates, that when he was in *Germany*, *Reguli novem ex diversis gentibus*, &c. nine petty Kings came from divers Nations, and threw themselves at his Feet; as he himself wrote to the *Senate* of *Rome*, in a Letter which is there recorded. In which he calls them *Novem Reges*, Nine Kings.

C H A P. XIII.

Ver. 1. **N**OW *Joshua* was old and stricken in Years.] To what Age he was advanced, we cannot certainly know; because we do not know how old he was when they came out of *Egypt*. Some think *three and forty*; and then he was fourscore and three when they came into *Canaan*: And now, it may be gathered by probable Conjectures, wanted not much of an hundred.

And the LORD said unto him, *Thou art old and stricken in Years, and there remaineth yet very much Land to be possessed.*] Which, in his declining Age, he could not hope to live to conquer; and therefore, he would have him go about another Business, ver. 7.

Ver. 2. *This is the Land that yet remains.*] To be subdued hereafter.

All the Borders of the Philistines.] Who lay in the South-West Part of *Canaan*, near the Sea.

And all Geshuri.] Which was a City, and a Country, in the North-East, not far from *Hermon*; belonging to the Lot of the Tribe of *Manasseh*. See *Deut.* iii. 14.

Ver. 3. *From Sihor, which is before Egypt.*] He describes more largely the Borders of the *Philistines*; whose Country extended along the Sea Coast, South and North; from *Sihor*, which

was a little Stream from one of the Branches of *Nile*; whereby *Palestine* was bounded on that Side. See *Gen.* xv. 18. and *Vossius de Orig. & Progr. Idolol.* Lib. 2. Cap. 74.

Even unto the Borders of Ekron Northward.] A famous City among the *Philistines*, where *Baal-zebub* was worshipped, called in the New Testament the Prince of the Devils (or Dæmons) because he was the principal God of the People of *Palestine*. This City was given to the Tribe of *Judah* at first, xv. 45. afterwards to the Tribe of *Dan*, xix. tho' neither of them could get the Possession of it.

Which is counted to the Canaanite.] For the *Philistines* were not original Inhabitants of this Country, which belonged to the Off-spring of *Canaan*, the youngest Son of *Ham*; whereas the *Philistines* were descended from *Misraim*, his second Son; who expelled the *Avites* out of this Country; as we read *Deut.* ii. 23. And see my Annotations on *Gen.* x. 14, 19.

Five Lords of the Philistines.] Which Country was under the Government of five Lords, as they are constantly called in Scripture; in the *Hebrew*, *Seraim*, or *Seranaim*; which seems to be an antient *Phœnician* Word (the same with *Sarim*) for a Ruler of a Province, or City. The *LXX* call them *στῆρες*, and the *Vulgar Latin*, *Reguli*, petty Princes. But they are never called *Melakim*, i. e. Kings, in Scripture, as the rest of the Princes of *Canaan* are. Which inclines me to think, that their Government was not so absolute, as that of the rest of the Kings of *Canaan*. Only we read in future Times, that *Achish* was King of *Gath*; having it seems, in *David's* Days, made himself more absolute than the former Lords of that Place.

The Gazathites, and the Ashdathites, the Ekronites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites.] These People had their Names from the five principal Cities in this Country, where they inhabited; which are commonly known.

Also the Avites.] These were a People mixed with them, being a Remnant (as I said before) of the ancient Inhabitants of this Country. But there was no distinct Lord of them, there being but five in all; and so many without one over these. Some have confounded them with the *Hivites*; but their Name is quite different in the *Hebrew*, and so is their Country. For the *Hivites* lived in *Hermon* in the North; and these here in the West. From whence tho' they were driven by the *Caphtorites* (*Deut.* ii. 23.) yet some of them, it seems, remained; as several of the *Canaanites* did, when the *Israelites* dispossessed them of their Country. See *Bochartus* in his *Phaleg*. Lib. 4. Cap. 36. who thinks they were not the Off-spring of *Canaan*; but it is manifest they inhabited Part of the Country belonging to him: For *Sidon* was the First-born of *Canaan*, who was settled on that Coast; and the Border of the *Canaanites* is said to be from thence unto *Gaza*, *Gen.* x. 19.

Ver. 4. *From the South.*] Of the *Philistines* Country.

All the Land of the Canaanites.] All that Tract of Land which belonged to the People properly called *Canaanites*; who lived upon the Sea-Coast.

And

And Merab.] We find no mention of this Place elsewhere: Some translate it, *a Cave*.

That is besides the Sidonians.] Who were in the Northern Point of that Sea-Coast.

Unto Aphek.] See xii. 18. Where I observed there were two Cities of this Name; but it is most reasonable here to understand that in the Tribe of *Asher*; whose King tho' *Joshua* had slain, he had not taken his Country.

To the Borders of the Amorites.] Who were in these Parts: For they being a mighty People, had dispersed themselves, not only in the East, and in the South; but in these Northern Regions.

Ver. 5. *And the Land of the Gibriles.]* A People inhabiting a City called *Gabal*, and the Country about it, near to *Tyre* and *Sidon*; as appears from *Ezek.* xxvii. 9. and in *1 Kings* v. 18. they are mentioned as Stone-Cutters sent by *Hiram* King of *Tyre* to King *Solomon*. See also *Psal.* lxxxiii. 7.

And all Lebanon toward the Sun-rising.] They extended their Conquests thus far, xi. 17. but could not subdue the Eastern Part of this Country.

From Baal-Gad under Mount Hermon, unto the entering into Hamath.] concerning *Baal-Gad*, see xi. 17. and concerning the entering into *Hamath*, *Numb.* xxxiv. 8.

Ver. 6. *All the Inhabitants of the Hill Country.]* In the Northern Parts of the Land.

From Lebanon.] This shews what hilly Country he speaks of.

Unto Misrephath-maim.] A Place before-mentioned, xi. 8. where, as I observed, some render it *Hot Waters*, or *Baths*: For *Sbaraph* signifies to burn, and *Maim* is Waters. And I may add, there are those that think they were *Lime Kilns*, others *Glass-Furnaces*; but most likely *Salt-Pits*.

And all the Sidonians.] Who were near to the Inhabitants of *Libanus*, Westward upon the Sea.

Them will I drive out before the Children of Israel.] If they persisted constant in his Worship and Service. Which they did not; and therefore we never read that the *Sidonians* were conquered by the *Israelites*; and the People of *Lebanon* were only made Tributaries in the Days of *David* and *Solomon*.

Only.] Or rather therefore, as the Word *Rak* sometimes signifies. See *ch.* i. *ver.* ult.

Divide thou it by Lot unto the Children of Israel for an Inheritance.] Tho' they be not yet driven out, yet, since I have promised to expel them, assign all the fore-mentioned Countries to the Children of *Israel* by Lot, as the Inheritance I have bestowed upon them. Which gave them a strong Assurance they should have all this Land; both because God had given it to them for an *Inheritance*, and ordered it to be divided by Lot.

As I have commanded them.] Or, as I now command thee, and give thee Authority to do.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore divide this Land for an Inheritance, unto the Nine Tribes, and the Half Tribe of Manasseh.]* Both that which was conquered, and that which remained unconquered,

was to be divided, that every Tribe might know what belonged to them, by God's Gift; and be encouraged to attempt the Conquest of it, when they were able; and be preserved from entering into any Covenant or Society with those, who kept their Inheritance from them; and likewise hinder the Unconquered People from joining their Forces together to recover their Country, the *Israelites* inhabiting the Cities and Fields that lay between them.

Ver. 8. *With whom.]* That is with the other half of the Tribe before-mentioned.

The Reubenites and Gadites have received their Inheritance, which Moses gave them beyond Jordan Eastward.] *Numb.* xxxii. 33, &c.

Even as Moses the Servant of the Lord gave them.] Which he did by Order from God; and therefore they were not to be disturbed in their Possession, *Deut.* iii. 18.

Here the Words of God to *Joshua* (*ver.* 1.) end; and in the next Verse the Writer of this Book begins to describe the Country which God ordered to be given to the forenamed two Tribes and an half, that there might be no future Dispute about this Division; but it might be held as good, as that which was made by Lot among the rest of the Tribes.

Ver. 9. *From Aroer that is upon the Brink of the River Arnon, and the City that is in the midst of the River.]* See xii. 2. and *Deut.* iii. 16.

And all the Plain of Medeba unto Dibon.] These are two Cities which the *Amorites* took from the *Moabites* (as we read *Numb.* xxi. 30.) and the *Israelites* took from them when they conquered *Sihon* their King. The former of them was in the Portion of the *Reubenites*; the other of the *Gadites*: And when the Ten Tribes were carried Captive, they returned into the Possession of the *Moabites* again. For *Isaiah* speaks of them as belonging to *Moab*, xv. 2. and so doth *Jeremiah*, xlviii. 22: The Plain of *Medeba* seems to be the same with the Plain of *Moab*.

Ver. 10. *And all the Cities of Sihon King of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon, unto the Border of the Children of Ammon.]* See *Numb.* xxi. 24, 25, &c.

Ver. 11. *And Gilead, and the Border of the Geshurites, and Maachabites.]* *Geshur* and *Maacha* were two Cities near Mount *Hermon*, in the extreme Bounds of this Country Northward; whose Inhabitants the *Israelites* could not drive out (*ver.* 13.) and yet their Land was divided among them.

And all Mount Hermon, and all Bashan, unto Salcab.] See all this Verse explained, xii. 5. I shall only add, that *Maacab* was in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, and is the City which *Ptolomy* calls *Epicaeos*. Which Name the *Chaldee* Paraphrast uses both here and xii. 4, 5. and *Deut.* iii. 14. instead of *Maacha*; as *Bochart* observes, L. 2. *Phaleg*. Cap. 6.

Ver. 12. *All the Kingdom of Og in Bashan, which reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei, who remained of the Remnant of the Giants.* See xii. 4. and *Deut.* iii. 11.

For these did Moses smite, and cast them out.] These *Rephaim* (which we translate *Giants*) were perfectly conquered, and rooted out by *Moses*. They were smitten in *Abraham's* Time, by *Chedarlaomer*, *Gen.* xiv. 5. but recovered Strength so much, that their Country, when *Moses* conquered it, was called the *Land of Giants*, *Deut.* iii. 13.

Ver. 13. Nevertheless, the Children of Israel expelled not the Geshurites and Maachathites.] See *Ver. 2.*

But the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwelt among the Israelites unto this Day.] For *Joshua* growing old (*Ver. 1.*) made no further Conquest, but left this People unsubdued, as *Moses* also had done.

Ver. 14. Only unto the Tribe of Levi he gave no Inheritance.] For the Tythes of the whole Country were instead of their Portion in Land, *Deut.* xviii. 2. And this is set down here by *Joshua*, as formerly by *Moses*, to shew that they had as indisputable a Right to the Tythes, as their Brethren had to the Land.

The Sacrifices of the LORD God of Israel, made by Fire, are their Inheritance.] That is, the Inheritance of the Priests; for the whole Tribe of *Levi* had nothing to do with them. See *Numb.* xviii. where the Portion of the Priests and of the Levites is exactly set down. And see *Ver. 33.* of this Chapter, and *xiv. 3.* xviii. 7.

As he said unto them.] See *Numb.* xviii. 20, 21. where this is distinctly said, both with respect to the Priests and to the Levites.

Ver. 15. And Moses gave unto the Tribe of the Children of Reuben, Inheritance, according to their Families.] Having said in general what *Moses* gave to the two Tribes and an half, he proceeds to set down in particular, what Share each of them had in this Country: That so, they might no more quarrel among themselves about their Portion, than the nine Tribes and half quarrel with them all. And first, he mentions what Part of the Land was given to *Reuben*; which was divided into as many Portions, as they had Families.

Ver. 16. Their Coast was from Aroer, that is on the Bank of Arnon, &c.] See *ver. 9.* *Aroer* itself was in the Tribe of *Gad*, *Numb.* xxxii. 34. unto which the Portion of the *Reubenites* reached.

Ver. 17. Heshbon, and all the Cities that are in the Plain.] He means the Plain before mentioned, *ver. 9.*

Dibon.] It is said plainly in *Numb.* xxxii. 34. that it belonged to the *Gadites*; for it was, as *Masius* well judges, in the Confines of both Tribes; and so was inhabited by both. Which is to be said also of *Heshbon*, here ascribed to the *Reubenites*; but in *xxi. 39.* is said to be a City of the *Levites* in the Tribe of *Gad*. And so we read also in *1 Chron.* vi. ult. And this is still more evident; for *Heshbon*, which in this Verse is reckoned to the *Reubenites*, in the 26th Verse of this very Chapter, is said to be given to the Tribe of *Gad*; which is a Demonstration they had it between them.

Bamoth-baal, and Beth-baal-meon.] We read of *Bamoth* not far from this Country, *Numb.*

xxi. 19. but no where else of *Bamoth-baal*; which, it is probable, was some high Place where *Baal* was worshipped; for we read of high Places in this Country, *Numb.* xxi. 28. We find mention of *Baal-meon* in many Places, particularly *Numb.* xxxii. 38. where it is said to be given to this Tribe. And the Addition of *Beth* to it, signifies there was some House, that is, Temple of *Baal* in this Place.

Ver. 18. And Jabaza.] Here they fought with *Sibon*. See *Numb.* xxi. 23.

And Kedemoth.] From whence *Moses* sent friendly Messengers to *Sibon*, to desire a peaceable Passage thro' his Country, *Deut.* iii. 26.

And Mephaath.] This, with the two foregoing, were *Levitical* Cities in the Tribe of *Reuben*, *xxi. 36, 37.* *1 Chron.* vi. 78, 79.

Ver. 19. And Kirjathaim and Sibmah.] These two are mentioned in *Numb.* xxxii. 37, 38. as given to the *Reubenites*.

And Zareth-shabar.] We do not read of this City any where else.

In the Mount of the Valley.] In the Mount which overlooked the great Plain before-mentioned; which may be supposed to be one of the Mountains of *Abarim*, where this City, and perhaps the two former, were seated.

Ver. 20. And Baal-Peor.] It seems to have had its Name from the filthy Idol which was there worshipped by the *Moabites*, *Numb.* xxv. 3, 5. See *Deut.* xxxiv. 6.

And Ashdod-Pisgab and Beth-Jeshimoth.] See *xii. 3.*

Ver. 21. And all the Cities of the Plain.] As well as those mentioned in the Mountain which overlooked it, *Ver. 19.*

And all the Kingdom of Sibon King of the Amorites.] That is, all the fore-mentioned Places belonged to the Kingdom of *Sibon*. But they had not all his Kingdom given them; for it was shared between them and the *Gadites*, as appears from *Ver. 27.*

Whom Moses smote with the Princes of Midian.] Not in the War with *Sibon*, mentioned *Numb.* xxi. but in another War after that, undertaken by a particular Command of God, *Numb.* xxxi.

Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba.] Who are mentioned as killed in that War, *Numb.* xxxi. 8.

Which were Dukes of Sibon.] This is the Reason why they are here mentioned, because, tho' they lived in *Midian*, yet they were Tributaries to *Sibon*; and, it is likely, assisted him in his War with *Israel*, in which tho' they then escaped, yet afterward they were slain by them.

Dwelling in the Country.] It is uncertain whether he meant that *Sibon* had given them some Place in his Country to dwell in, (that they might be ready on all Occasions to assist him with their Forces) or, that they were settled in the Country of *Midian*; whereas some of that People were unsettled, and moved from Place to Place, like to the ancient *Nomades*. However it was, they were such great Men in *Midian*, that they are called *Kings*, *Numb.* xxxi. 8. as here they are called *Princes*; but much inferior to *Sibon*, whom they served only as great Commanders

manders under him. So our Translators, I suppose, understood it, which made them render the Hebrew Word *Nefichi* by the English Word *Dukes*; which we elsewhere translate *Nobles*, in *Psal.* lxxxiii. 13.

Ver. 22. *Balaam also the Son of Beor the Sooth-sayer.*] He had been a Prophet, but degenerated into a Sooth-sayer, or Diviner, (see *Numb.* xxii. 5, 6, 7, 8.) and became a Prophet again for the sake of *Israel*.

Did the Children of Israel slay with a Sword, among them that were slain by them.] It is hard to give an Account why he is here mentioned; unless we suppose him to have been an Adviser of *Sihon*, and those *Dukes* that joined with him to undertake the War; as it is certain he was of the *Midianites* to draw in the *Israelites* to commit Idolatry, *Numb.* xxv. 17.

Ver. 23. *And the Border of the Children of Reuben, was Jordan, and the Border thereof, &c.*] This River was the Bounds of their Country Westward.

Ver. 24. *And Moses gave Inheritance unto the Tribe of Gad, &c.*] As he had done to the *Reubenites*, Ver. 15. See there.

Ver. 25. *And their Coast was Jazer.*] See *Numb.* xxi. 32. and xxxii. 35.

And all the Cities of Gilead.] That lay next to *Jazer*: For half of *Gilead* was given to the Children of *Manasseh*, Ver. 31.

And half of the Land of the Children of Ammon.] The Children of *Israel* took nothing from them, but were expressly forbidden to meddle with their Country, *Deut.* ii. 19. He speaks therefore of that Part of their Country which *Sihon* had taken from them (as he did Part of the *Moabites* Country, *Numb.* xxi. 26.) and the *Israelites*, having vanquished *Sihon*, justly possessed from *Arnon* to *Jabbok*; as *Jephthah* represents to the *Ammonites*, when they demanded this Land as belonging to them; when the *Israelites* had enjoyed it near three hundred Years, *Judg.* xi. 13, 22, &c.

Unto Aroer.] This was the Bounds of that Country taken from the *Ammonites* by *Sihon*, from *Aroer* unto *Jabbok*; for *Aroer* was seated upon *Arnon* before-mentioned, *Judg.* xi. 13.

That is before Rabbah.] Over against *Rabbah*, the chief City of the *Ammonites* Country; which was in the North Part of it, as *Aroer* in the South.

Ver. 26. *And from Hesbbon.*] See Ver. 17.

Unto Ramath-mizpeh.] The same with *Ramath-Gilead*, of which we read xx. 8. and many other Places. It seems to be the same Place which is called *Mizpah* of *Gilead*, where *Jephthah* the *Gileadite* lived, *Judg.* xi. 29, 34.

And Betonim.] We know no more of this Place, than that it was, in all likelihood, a City in the North Part of this Tribe, as *Ramath-Gilead* was; and *Hesbbon* in the South.

And from Mahanaim.] This was a City built in that Place where *Jacob* saw the Camps of Angels, *Gen.* xxxii. 1, 2. It was not far from the River *Jabbok*, as appears from that Chapter, Ver. 22. This City was very considerable in After-times; *Isboseth*, who reigned over *Israel* after *Saul*, having his Residence here; and *David* making some Stay here when he

fled from *Abshalom*, 2 *Sam.* ii. 8, 12. xvii. 27. It was one of the *Levitical Cities*, xxi. 37.

Unto Debir.] There was another City of this Name in the Tribe of *Judab*, xv. 15, 49. But this was (as *S. Hierom* and *Eusebius* tell us) a City of the *Ammonites* upon *Jordan*.

Ver. 27. *And in the Valley Beth-aram, and Beth-nimrab.*] Having mentioned the Frontier Places, he comes to speak of those Cities which were in the midst of the Country. And these two are mentioned, *Numb.* xxxii. 36. The latter of which, here called *Beth-nimrab* (*Domus Pardorum*, as *Bochart* interprets it) is simply called *Nimra* in the third Verse of that Chapter. And the Waters of *Nimrim* (*Isa.* xv. 6.) seem to have been in the same Place; which *Moses* and *Joshua* say belonged to the *Gadites*; but *Isaiab* and *Jeremiah* call it a City of the *Moabites*. Who in the Days of those Prophets, after the Ten Tribes were carried captive, recovered those Places. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozycon*, P. 1. Lib. 3. Cap. 7.

And Succoth.] Which was the Place where *Jacob* fixed, after he had passed over *Jabbok*, in his Return from *Padan-Aram*, *Gen.* xxxiii. 17.

And Zaphon.] A Place which *S. Hierom* saith lay upon the River *Jordan*.

The rest of the Kingdom of Sihon King of Hesbbon.] That is, all but that which was given to the *Reubenites*.

Jordan and his Border.] For Instance, the Country bordering upon *Jordan*.

Even unto the Edge of the Sea of Cinneroth, on the other Side Jordan Eastward.] To the extreme Part of the Lake, in After-times called *Genesareth*; where the River *Jordan* came out of it on the South-East.

Ver. 28. *This is the Inheritance of the Children of Gad, after their Families, the Cities, and their Villages.*] Which are not all named, but they were in the Region here described.

Ver. 29. *And Moses gave Inheritance unto the Half Tribe of Manasseh, &c.*] The Country which they conquered on the other Side *Jordan*, being too large for the *Reubenites* and *Gadites* alone, *Moses* bestowed what follows upon the Half Tribe of *Manasseh*; who did not desire it, as far as I can find, (see *Numb.* xxxii. 1, 2.) but were thought fit to be joined with the other two Tribes, because they were very numerous, (*Numb.* xxvi. 34.) and, it is likely, had great Store of Cattle, as the other had.

Ver. 30. *And their Coast was from Mahanaim.*] Mentioned before, Ver. 26.

All Bashan, all the Kingdom of Og King of Bashan.] This Kingdom consisted of three Parts, (*Deut.* iii. 13.) half of *Gilead*, *Bashan*, and the Region of *Argob*: All which sometimes are comprehended under the Name of *Bashan*, because it was the principal Part of this Kingdom.

And all the Towns of Fair, which are in Bashan.] This is an Explication of what went before; for these Towns were in the fore-named Kingdom of *Bashan*, and not distinct from it. Why they are called *the Towns of Fair*, *Moses* gives an Account, *Numb.* xxxii. 41.

Threescore Cities.] Which were in the Region of *Argob*, as we read *Deut.* iii. 4, 14.

Ver.

Ver. 13. *And half Gilead.*] The other half, that was not given to the *Gadites*, ver. 25. This also is but an Explication of what he said at the first; for *Gilead* was not distinct from the Kingdom of *Og King of Basban*; but a Part of it.

And Astaroth and Edrei, Cities of the Kingdom of Og in Basban.] Royal Cities, as is commonly thought, from xii. 4.

Were pertaining unto the Children of Machir, the Son of Manasseh.] All the Posterity of *Manasseh* came from *Machir*; for he had no other Son beside him, Numb. xxxii. 29. unto whose Children, that is, to one half of them, (as it is explained in the following Words) he gave this Part of that Kingdom, Deut. iii. 15.

Even to the one half of the Children of Machir, by their Families.] Among whom *Jair* and his Posterity had the Honour to be reckoned, tho' he was of the Tribe of *Judab*; because he was his Grandchild by his Daughter, and so instrumental in conquering this Country, that he had his Inheritance given him here, 1 Chron. ii. 21. &c. Numb. xxxiv. 41, 42.

Ver. 32. *These are the Countries which Moses did distribute for Inheritance in the Plains of Moab, on the other Side Jordan by Jericho Eastward.*] Which Countries, with their Bounds and Limits, are thus particularly described, that every Tribe might rest satisfied with God's Appointment, and not invade their Brethrens Territories.

Ver. 33. *But unto the Tribe of Levi, Moses gave not any Inheritance: The LORD God of Israel was their Inheritance, as he said unto them.*] This had been noted before in this very Chapter, ver. 14. and is again noted, xiv. 3, 4. and again xviii. 7. Which frequent Repetition was for the Honour of this Tribe; and that the People might have the greater Regard to them, and Care of them.

C H A P. XIV.

Ver. 1. **A**ND *these are the Countries.*] Viz. Those mentioned in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and following Chapters; for this Chapter is but a kind of Preface to the Division of the Land.

Which the Children of Israel inherited in the Land of Canaan.] Which was now conquered by *Joshua*; as that of *Sibon* and *Og* had been by *Moses*.

Which Eleazar the Priest, and Joshua the Son of Nun, and the Heads of the Fathers of the Tribes of the Children of Israel distributed for Inheritance unto them.] According to the Command given by God to *Moses*, Numb. xxxiv. 17, 18. Where the Names of the twelve Heads of the Tribes, or the Princes (as they are there called) are set down, ver. 19, 20, &c.

Ver. 2. *By Lot was their Inheritance.*] To take away all Occasion of Controversy, the Matter being determined by God.

As the LORD commanded by the Hand of Moses.] Numb. xxvi. 55, 56. xxxiii. 54.

For the Nine Tribes, and for the Half Tribe.] Who were to be provided for in the Land of

Canaan, as the other, it here follows, had been on the other Side *Jordan*.

Ver. 3. *For Moses had given the Inheritance of two Tribes and an Half, on the other Side Jordan.*] This seems to argue a strong Faith, which the nine Tribes and Half had in the Promise of God; that they were contented to see their Brethren put in actual Possession of their Inheritance; when they were only in Hope of their Portion.

But unto the Levites gave he no Inheritance among them.] Neither on this Side *Jordan*, nor on the other; as was said before, xiii. 33. and mentioned here again for the Reason following.

Ver. 4. *For the Children of Joseph were two Tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim.*] The Privilege of the First-born, was transferred from *Reuben's* to *Joseph* (1 Chron. v. 1, 2.) from whose two Sons sprung two Tribes: So that there were still twelve Tribes, without reckoning *Levi* for one, Gen. xlviii. 5, 6.

Therefore they gave no Part to the Levites in the Land.] Because the Children of *Joseph* succeeded in their room as the Vulgar *Latin* translates the foregoing Words; that is, to make up the Number of Twelve Tribes.

Save Cities to dwell in.] Not for a Possession, as *Conrad Pellicanus* observes, but only for an Habitation: For they could not sell them, as their Brethren might their Possessions.

With their Suburbs for their Cattle, and for their Substance.] See Numb. xxxv. 2, 3, &c.

Ver. 5. *As the LORD commanded Moses, so the Children of Israel did.*] That is assigned them Cities and Suburbs, xxi. 1, 2, &c.

And they divided the Land.] That is, when *Eleazar*, *Joshua*, and the Princes had divided it.

Ver. 6. *Then the Children of Judab.*] Before they went to cast Lots for the Division of the Land, some of the Children of *Judab* interposed in the behalf of *Caleb*; coming along with him, I suppose, as Witnesses to the Truth of what he alledged.

Came unto Joshua in Gilgal.] Where the Tabernacle as yet was; for *Joshua* had not removed his Camp from thence; and accordingly, here the Division of the Land began to be made; tho' it was finished at *Shiloh*, as we read ch. xviii.

And Caleb, the Son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, said unto him.] This shews that he was the principal Person concerned in this Address to *Joshua*; tho' the rest perhaps, who came along with him, were not only Witnesses to the Truth of his Pretensions, but came to desire *Joshua* to begin the Division of the Land; the Tribe of *Judab*, now that the *Reubenites* were provided for, being the eldest of those that wanted their Portion. Among whom, *Caleb* was not only a considerable Person, but one of those Princes who were appointed by God to assist in the Division of the Land, Numb. xxxiv. 19. and therefore would not be a Judge in his own Case, but have it settled before by *Joshua*, the supreme Governour of God's People. Why he is called the *Kenezite*, is not easy to resolve; nor is it certain, whether *Caleb* or *Jephunneh*

be called the *Kenezite*. But it comes to the same, whether the one or the other be so called, and the *Hebrew Words* will be either Construction; yet *St. Hierom* and the *LXX.* take it to belong to *Caleb*, some of whose Ancestors were called *Kenez*; which was certainly a Name very common in their Family. See *xv. 17.* and *Judg. i. 13.* And there is no Improbability in it, that *Kenez* was the Family of *Jephunneh*, from whence both he and his Son were called *Kenezites*.

Thou knowest the Thing that the LORD said unto Moses, the Man of God.] He gives him this Title, that what he order'd might be thought of greater Authority, *i. e.* a Divine Command.

Concerning me and thee, in Kadesh-Barnea.] Which he was confident *Joshua* could not but remember, being concerned at it as well as himself. See *Numb. xiv. 24, 30, 38.*

Ver. 7. Forty Years old was I when Moses the Servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh-Barnea, to spy out the Land.] He mentions this, partly to shew that *Moses* took care to send Persons of some Experience, able to make Observations, and judge aright; as well as in their full Strength of Body, able to travel and take Pains. Such, it is probable, were all the rest, as well as he; Men grown up every way to Maturity, both of Judgment and bodily Vigour.

And I brought him Word again, as it was in my Heart.] Delivered my true Opinion freely and sincerely, without either Fear or Flattery, *Numb. xiii. 30.*

Ver. 8. Nevertheless, my Brethren that went with me, made the Heart of the People melt.] *Numb. xiii. 31, 32. xiv. 1, &c.* which did not discourage him at all from speaking the Truth.

But I wholly followed the LORD my God.] This Testimony God himself gave him, *Numb. xiv. 24.* which he might therefore mention without any Breach of Modesty, it being the Ground of his present Petition.

Ver. 9. And Moses sware on that Day, saying, Surely the Land whereon thy Feet have trodden, shall be thine Inheritance, and thy Childrens for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the LORD my God.] See *Deut. i. 34, 35, 36.* This was first pronounced by God himself, and that with an Oath, *Numb. xiv. 21, 24.* See my Notes there. Some think *his treading on it with his Feet*, was his taking Possession, and being admitted the Owner of that Land; according to the present Notion of Civil Lawyers, who will have *possessio* to be as much as *pedis positio*. But this is only a modern Conceit.

Ver. 10. And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five Years.] Thus far had he fulfilled his Words, in preserving him alive till the Country was conquer'd, wherein he promis'd him a certain Portion; so that he wanted only actual Possession of it.

Even since the LORD spake this Word unto Moses while the Children of Israel wandered in the Wilderness.] Which was thirty and eight Years.

And now, lo, I am this Day fourscore and five Years old.] It seems then that seven Years were

pass'd since they came into *Canaan*, before they began to divide the Land; which was not till a Year after the War was ended. See *xi. 18.* As for the Time that followed between the complete Division of the Land, and the Death of *Joshua*, it is not set down in this Book; nor have we Words in it, from whence to make a probable Conjecture about it, but only those *xxiii. 1.* where it is said, *A long time after God had given them Rest, Joshua waxed old, &c.* Which shews it is not to be restrain'd to so short a Time as *seven*, or *ten* Years, but may rather be thought *twenty*, as *Du Pin* computes it.

Ver. 11. As yet I am as strong this Day, as I was in the Day that Moses sent me.] As able, both in Body and Mind, to undertake, and to dispatch any Business, as he was forty and five Years ago: Which was a wonderful Blessing of God; and an Argument his Petition should be granted; because he wanted neither Courage nor Strength, to assault and take the Place he desired, if it were still in the *Canaanites* Hands; or to defend and preserve it, if it were already conquer'd.

As my Strength was then, even so is my Strength now, for War, both to go out and to come in.] This is a Repetition of what he affirm'd; as is usual, when a Thing is certain and undoubted. Concerning this Phrase, *go out and come in*, see *Numb. xxvii. 17.* And this shews the Force and Efficacy of God's Promise, confirm'd by an Oath; which (as *Dr. Jackson* well observes) was as remarkable in preserving his Life and Strength, as in bringing Mortality on others, who he sware should not enter into *Canaan*.

Ver. 12. Now therefore give me this Mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that Day.] The mountainous Country where *Hebron* lay, *xi. 21.* which was the Place promis'd to him, as I observ'd upon *Numb. xiv. 24.*

For thou bearest in that Day.] The *LXX.* and the *Vulgar Latin* refer this to what goes before, and make the Sense to be, as if he had said, *in thy Hearing*, God promised this Country to me.

How the Anakims were there, and that the Cities were great and strong.] The *Vulgar* makes the Sense to be, *where the Anakims are, &c.* See *Numb. xiii. 28, 32, 33.* He mentions *Cities* in the Plural Number; for we read of two other, beside *Hebron*, which they possess'd. *xi. 21.*

If so be the LORD will be with me.] These are not Words of doubting; but a pious Acknowledgment that nothing could be successfully enterprized, without God's gracious Assistance; of which, no question, he was very confident. The *Targum* hath it, *If so be the Word of the LORD will be my Helper*: Which is the constant Language of that Paraphrast in all this Book, upon such Occasions. See *i. 9, 17. vi. 27. x. 42. xxiii. 3, 10.*

Then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said.] Which whether it was done now, or before, when *Joshua* conquer'd the Country, is a Dispute. See *x. 37.*

Ver. 13. *And Joshua blessed him.*] Acknowledg'd his Deserts, and beseech'd God to prosper him in his Undertaking, and gave his Consent that he should have this Country: For then God is said to *bless* a Man, when he bestows his Benefits upon him; and we do not *bless* others to purpose, unless we do what they desire. Accordingly it here follows:

And gave unto Caleb the Son of Jephunneh, Hebron for an Inheritance.] That is, the Country about it: For Hebron itself was a City of the Priests, xxi. 11, 13. where it is expressly said ver. 12. the Fields and the Villages of it were given to Caleb.

Ver. 14. *Hebron therefore became the Inheritance of Caleb unto this Day, because he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel.*] God rewarded his Fidelity by this singular Gift, which he bestowed upon him before the Land was divided by Lot.

Ver. 15. *And the Name of Hebron before was Kirjath-Arba.*] See upon Gen. xxiii. 2.

Which Arba was a great Man among the Anakims.] Of great Authority, as well as Strength. So the Word *Gadol* is used, Gen. xxiv. 35. and so we call Men at this Day, who are of great Power, by the Name of *Magnates*. He was the Father of *Anak*, xv. 13. and xxi. 11. who either built this City, or fortify'd it, or made it his Royal Seat (being a kind of Prince among them) and perhaps was here bury'd; which made it be call'd his City. See upon Numb. xiii. 33.

And the Land had Rest from War.] Which gave them Liberty to divide the Land. This was said before, xi. ult. and now repeated, perhaps to shew that what is here reported concerning Caleb, was done some time ago, at the End of the War; and now mention'd to shew that he held this Portion of Land by a Divine Donation, before the Country was divided by Lot.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. **T**HIS then was the Lot of the Tribe of the Children of Judah.] The first Lot that came up was for the Tribe of Judah; in Honour of it, and that the Prophecy of Jacob might be fulfill'd concerning his Pre-eminence among his Brethren. The Manner of drawing these Lots, see upon Numb. xxvi. 55, 56. Which it is apparent could not be done, without a precedent Survey of the whole Country. A Description of which being laid before Joshua, he, and Eleazer, and the Princes, divided it into nine Shares and a half, as equal as they could; considering not merely the Quantity of Ground, but the Quality also, and Goodness of the Soil. This Survey is not mention'd here; but it is afterward, xviii. 4. and therefore is to be supposed when they began to divide the Land.

By their Families.] The Lot was only of so much Land (bound as follows) for the whole Tribe. Unto every Family of which a Portion was assign'd by Joshua, and the rest, who were appointed to see that none were neglected, and

that they had every one a just Proportion. Therefore the Lot for each Tribe was not so unalterably fix'd and determin'd, but that it might be enlarged or diminish'd; by taking from that Tribe which had too much, and giving it to that which had too little. See xix. 9.

Even to the Border of Edom, the Wilderness of Zin, Southward, was the uttermost Part of the South Coast.] See Numb. xxxiv. 2. Edom lay upon the Wilderness of Zin; and the Lot of Judah extended as far as that; which was the South Part of the Land. And indeed the Tribe of Judah (as *Conr. Pellicanus* observes) had half of the South Part of the whole Land of Canaan for their Portion; as the Tribes of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) had the North Part; with whom the rest of the Tribes were intermix'd, viz. Simeon, Benjamin, and Dan, with the Tribe of Judah; and Issachar, Zabulon, Asher, and Naphtali with the Portion of Joseph.

Ver. 2. *And their South Border was from the Shore of the Salt Sea.*] The foregoing Verse was a short Description of the Length of Judah's Country: Now he describes the Bounds of it on all Quarters: And here saith, that the Salt, or Dead Sea was the Bounds of it on the South-East. For so it was, as here follows:

From the Bay that looketh Southward] In the Hebrew from the Tongue; which signifies either a Creek or a Promontory, as some understand it, pointing to the South-East. See Numb. xxxiv. 3.

Ver. 3. *And it went out to the South-side of Maalebucrabbim.*] There was a Mountain so call'd, from the Multitude of Scorpions that were there. It lay at the End of this Lake, Numb. xxxiv. 4. From whence the Country of Acrabatene had its name, as Bochart thinks, (see *Hierozyicon*, P. 2. Lib. 5. Cap. 29.) which lay near the Country of Edom, 1 Maccab. v. 3.

And passed along to Zin, and ascended upon the South Side unto Kadesh-barnea.] This is the very Description of the Southern Bounds of the promis'd Land, Numb. xxxiv. 4.

And passed along to Hezron.] There is nothing said of this Place in the Book of Numbers; but it appears to have been a City from the 25th Verse of this Chapter.

And went up to Adar.] This Place is mention'd in the forenamed Numb. xxxiv. 4. and call'd Hazaradar. So that Hezron lay between Kadesh barnea and this Town.

And fetch'd a Compass to Karkaa.] This Place is not mention'd in Numbers, or any where else; but lay beyond Adar, not in a right Line, but bending towards the West.

Ver. 4. *And from thence it passed towards Azmon.*] This is mention'd in the fore-named Place, Numb. xxxiv. 4.

And went out unto the River of Egypt; and the going out of that Coast was at the Sea.] That is, the Mediterranean Sea. See Numb. xxxiv. 5.

This shall be your South Coast.] From the Tongue of the Salt Sea to the Mediterranean.

Ver.

Ver. 5. *And the East Border was the Salt Sea, even unto the End of Jordan.*] Having described the Southern Limits, he sets down the Eastern; which beginning where the Southern did, at the Tongue of the Salt Sea, reached to the other End of it, where *Jordan* falls into this Sea. So that the whole Length of this Sea, from one End of it to the other, was the Eastern Bounds of *Judah's* Country.

And their Border at the North Quarter, was from the Bay of the Sea, at the uppermost Part of Jordan.] It had its Beginning where the Eastern Border ended, viz. at the Mouth of *Jordan*, where it runs into the Salt Sea.

Ver. 6. *And the Border went up to Beth-hoglab.*] A City in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, xviii. 21.

And passed along by the North of Beth-arabah.] Another City in the same Tribe, xviii. 21. though there was one in this Tribe of the same Name, (ver. 61. of this Chapter) which some take to be the same City, which lay in the Frontier of both Tribes.

And the Border.] That is, this Northern Border.

Went up to the Stone of Boban, the Son of Reuben.] We find mention made of this Stone again in xviii. 17. where he speaks of the Bounds of the Tribe of *Benjamin*. It was but lately laid here, since the *Israelites* came into this Country; but by whom, or of what it was a Monument, is not known. It is certain *Bchan* did not dwell here; for the *Reubenites* had their Portion on the other Side of *Jordan*; but perhaps he performed some famous Exploit in this Place, or died and was buried here; being one of those that came over *Jordan* to assist their Brethren in the Conquest of *Canaan*.

Ver. 7. *And the Border went up towards Debir.*] Which is mentioned in no other Place: For it is not the same with that *Debir* in ver. 15. which was in the South near *Hebron*; but this in the Northern Parts.

From the Valley of Achor.] Mentioned, vii. 24, 26.

And so Northward looking towards Gilgal.] Having *Gilgal* on the North of it. Which is to be understood, not of that *Gilgal* near *Jericho*, but of that Place called *Geliloth*, xviii. 17. which was distant from thence, as appears by what follows.

That is before the going up to Adummim.] A Place which stood upon a rising Ground; which some think was in the Tribe of *Judah*, others of *Benjamin*.

Which was on the South Side of the River.] Or of the Brook; which some take to be the Brook *Cedron*.

And the Border passed toward the Waters of En-shemesh, and the Goings-out thereof were at En-rogel.] This Place, it is evident (1 Kings i. 9.) was near *Jerusalem*; which shews that *Gilgal* before mentioned, was not the Place where they were now encamped.

Ver. 8. *And the Border went up.*] For it was an Ascent from the Salt Sea to this Country; especially when they came nigh to this Place.

By the Valley of the Son of Hinnom.] A famous Place on the East Side of *Jerusalem*; and so de-

lightfully shady, that it invited them to idolatrous Worship in this Valley, whereby it became infamous, 2 Kings xxiii. 10. *Jerem.* vii. 32. *Hinnom*, in all Probability, was some eminent Person, in ancient Times, who was the Owner of this Valley: For it is sometimes called the Valley of the Children of *Hinnom*; which shews his Posterity were planted here. After it was polluted by Idolatry, it became a Place where they threw all their Filth, and Excrements, and dead Carcasses; and where there was a continual Fire, the *Jews* say, to burn Bones, and such sordid Things, as were thrown here; from whence, they think, it became the Name for *Hell-Fire*.

Unto the South Side of the Jebusite.] i. e. The City of the *Jebusites*.

The same is Jerusalem.] Which is called *Jebusi*, in the last Verse of the eighteenth Chapter, and *Jebus* *Judg.* xix. 10. Especially that Part of it fortified by the *Jebusites*, which was called Mount *Sion*, and lay on the South of *Jerusalem*.

And the Border went up to the Top of the Mountain.] Which is thought to be Mount *Moriab*.

That lieth before the Valley of Hinnom Westward.] It was Westward to the Valley of *Hinnom*; and so had that Valley on the East of it.

Which is at the End of the Valley of the Giants Northward.] Which Mountain had on the North-part the Valley of *Rephaim* (as the Word is in the *Hebrew*) which was in the Tribe of *Judah*, extending itself from Mount *Moriab*, as far as *Bethlehem*, as *Josephus* tells us.

Ver. 9. *And the Border was drawn from the Top of the Hill to the Fountain of the Water Nephtoab.*] Where this Fountain, or Well of Water was, cannot be known; for it is nowhere mentioned but here, and in xviii. 15.

And went out to the Cities of Mount Ephron.] This Place also is unknown; for it cannot be that in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, mentioned 1 Chron xiii. 19.

And the Border was drawn to Baalab, which is Kirjath-jearim.] Called ver. 60. and xviii. 14. *Kirjath-baal*; there being, it is likely, a Temple of *Baal* in this Place, whose Name the *Israelites* changed into *Kirjath-jearim*; which signifies, *urbs sylvarum*, because of the goodly Trees hereabouts, which made it the fitter for idolatrous Uses.

Ver. 10. *And the Border compassed from Baalab Westward.*] Not in a direct Line, but bending toward the West.

Unto Mount Seir.] Not that Mount belonging to the *Edomites*, but another of that Name.

And passed along unto the Side of Mount Jearim, which is Chesalon on the North Side.] This was a woody Country, as appears from the Name of this Mountain, and from Mount *Seir* also; which signifies as much as *hairy*.

And went down to Beth-shemesh.] A known Place in the Tribe of *Judah*, and a City of the Priests, xxi. 16.

And passed on to Timnah.] Another City in the same Tribe, ver. 17. but afterward given to the Tribe of *Dan*, xix. 43.

Ver. 11. *And the Border went out to the Side of Ekron Northward.*] This City belonged to the Philistines; but fell to the Lot of Judah, as did also Ashdod and Gaza, Ver. 45, 46, 47. But afterward Ekron was given to the Danites, as the forenamed Place tells us, xix. 43.

And the Border was drawn to Shicron, and passed along to Mount Baalab, and went out unto Jabneel.] It cannot now be known where these three Places were; only it appears by what follows, that they were not far from the Coast of the Philistines.

And the Goings-out of the Border were at the Sea.] That is, the Northern Border ended at the Mediterranean Sea; where there was a City called Jamnia; which some think the same with Jabneel.

Ver. 12. *And the West Border was to the great Sea, and the Coast thereof.*] All along that Coast of the Mediterranean, unto the River of Egypt; where the West Border met with the Southern, Ver. 4.

This is the Coast of the Children of Judah round about, according to their Families.] That is, thus their Lot was bounded on all Sides, in the first Draught of it. Which being afterward found too large, it was contracted into a narrower Compass, that more Room might be made for the Tribe of Simeon, who had Part of this Lot given them; as some other Places were added out of it, to the Tribes of Benjamin and Dan; as will appear afterwards.

Ver. 13. *And unto Caleb the Son of Jephunneh, he gave a Part among the Children of Judah.*] Or rather, he (that is, Joshua) had given him a Part in this Country, which by Lot fell to the Tribe of Judah. See the foregoing Chapter, xiv. 6, 7, &c. where we read how Caleb petitioned for it, and founded his Petition upon a Grant made to him of it, long ago, by God himself.

According to the Commandment of the LORD to Joshua.] God promised it by Moses; and it appears from these Words, that Joshua had an Order from God to make it good.

Even the City of Arba the Father of Anak, which is Hebron.] See xiv. 15. This is here again particularly remembred, and an Addition made to it, for this Reason; that Joshua having described the Bounds of the Country of Judah, and intending to set down the particular Cities which were included in it, and distributed among them (as he had just before said, Ver. 12.) according to their Families; it might be remembred, that there were two Cities, or rather the Territories about them, given to two Families, antecedent to this Distribution made by him, Eleazar and the Princes. Which being a Matter fit to remain for ever upon Record, and to be known to all Posterity, he inserts it here at large, in this Description of the Portion of Judah; of which, it is likely, every Family of that Tribe had a Map in their Houses; that they knowing their Limits, might both preserve them, and keep within them.

Ver. 14. *And Caleb drove thence.*] Not by his own Power alone, but by the Confederate Army of the Tribe of Judah and Simeon, (Judg.

i. 3, 9, &c.) in which, it is probable, he had a principal Command; and led on that Party, which assaulted this City. See x. 36, 37. xi. 21.

The three Sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmi, the Children of Anak.] Whom he had seen five and forty Years ago, and was not at all affrighted at them. See Numb. xiii. 22. and Judg. i. 10, &c.

Ver. 15. *And he went up thence to the Inhabitants of Debir.*] See x. 38, 39.

And the Name of Debir before was Kirjath-Sepher.] See Judg. i. 11, 12. It is called also Kirjath-Sanna, Ver. 49. of this Chapter; which hath the same Signification: For Sunna (as Bochart observes, Lib. 2. Canaan, Cap. 17.) in the Arabick Language, is Learning, or the Law. The Chaldee there calls it Kirjath-arche; which he translates urbs archivorum, the City where the ancient Records of these Nations were kept. All which shews the Conjecture of some very learned Men is not improbable, who think this City in those Times was the Seat of Learning, as Athens was among the Greeks in future Ages: Insomuch, that Grotius takes this City to be the same with that which Xenophon calls Φοινίκων γυμνάσιον, the School of the Phœnicians. But, as the Word γυμνάσιον in Xenophon's Days did not signify a School of Learning, but a Place designed for Exercises of the Body; so we do not read of any famous Place in that Country, to which Men resorted in his Time for Study.

Ver. 16. *And Caleb said.*] Made Proclamation, I suppose, throughout the Army, which he led against Debir.

He that smiteth Kirjath-Sepher, and taketh it.] Assaults this Fortrefs, and possesseth himself of it.

To him will I give Achsah my Daughter to Wife.] With this Place, I suppose, for her Dowry.

Ver. 17. *And Othniel the Son of Kenaz, the Brother of Caleb, took it.*] He was stirred up by the Spirit of God, it is probable, (as he was when he was made Judge of Israel, Judg. iii. 9, 10.) to attack this Place with an extraordinary Courage; in which the Providence of God appeared (as Caleb hoped it would) in bestowing his Daughter upon a worthy Person, and keeping the Inheritance in his own Tribe.

And he gave him Achsah his Daughter to Wife.] Some think this was not lawful, because he was her Uncle: But this is a Mistake, for Othniel was not Caleb's Brother, but Kenaz, who was Othniel's Father. For Caleb is constantly called the Son of Jephunneh, and Othniel the Son of Kenaz. Therefore they had not the same Father, but were very near of Kin; which is all the Word Brother signifies in many Places.

Ver. 18. *And it came to pass, as she came unto him.*] As she was brought from her Father's House to her Husband's; according to the accustomed manner. See Selden, in his Uxor. Hebr. L. 2. Cap. 11.

That she moved him to ask of her Father a Field.] Desired her Husband, unto whom she thought her Father at this time would deny nothing,

nothing, to bestow a Field upon her. Or, perhaps, she moved him to give her Leave to ask it of her Father; as she did, either by his Permission, or by his Desire; who might tell her, it was more proper for her to ask it, than himself.

And she lighted off her Ass.] Upon Which they rode then in those Countries; having no Horses, nor Mules, till After-times. And her lighting down, was in Reverence to her Father; unto whom she addressed herself in an humble Posture.

*And Caleb said to her, What wouldest thou?] He seems to have prevented her Request; knowing, by her Posture, she had something to desire of him. But Ludov. de Dieu takes it quite otherwise; that when she came to her Husband's House, she did not alight from her Ass, but continued still sitting upon it. Which her Father observing, and asking her the Reason, why she did not come down and go to her Husband; she told him, she had first a thing to beg of him. And thus both the LXX. and the Vulgar translate it, as if she did not alight, but sighed and cried, *ἐκ τῆ ὄνως*, from the Ass on which she sat.*

Ver. 19. Who answered, Give me a Blessing.] Bestow a Gift upon me, as the Word Blessing is used, Gen. xxxiii. 11. or, make my Happiness compleat.

For thou hast given me a South Land.] A dry Country; being both mountainous, and towards the South; that is, towards the Desarts of Arabia, from whence very hot and scorching Winds were wont to blow.

Give me also Springs of Water.] A Field hard by, wherein were Springs of Water: For it was not merely the Springs she begged, but the Ground in which they were; as appears from the foregoing Verse, where she moved her Husband to ask a Field.

And he gave her the upper Springs, and the nether Springs.] Whereby that dry Ground might be watered, and made fruitful. He seems to have given her more than she desired; not only those Springs that were in the Mountain, but those which were below also. That so neither the rising Ground, nor the Plain, might want Water; as *Arias Montanus* expounds it.

Ver. 20. This is the Inheritance of the Tribe of the Children of Judah, according to their Families.] Now follows an Account of the Cities within the Lot of this Tribe; which were assigned to their several Families, after *Hebron*, which was the principal of them (for here *David* reigned over the Tribe of *Judah* alone, seven Years) was given to *Caleb*. Which the *Jews* generally think he did not get into his Possession till after the Death of *Joshua*; as is related in the Book of *Judges*. See there, i. 11, 12, 13, &c.

Ver. 21. And the uttermost Cities of the Tribe of the Children of Judah.] Those that were in the Confines: for he doth not seem to number all that were in the Heart of the Country. So the *Jews* think; tho' the Truth is, as will appear in the following Part of the Chapter, he only begins with the outmost Ci-

ties, but afterwards proceeds to those that were in the midst of the Country.

Towards the Coast of Edom Southward.] He begins with those that lay on the South Side of the Country; which was the Border he first described, *Ver. 1, 2.*

Kabzeel.] Where that valiant Person *Benajab* was born, who smote two Lion-like Men of *Moab*, 1 *Chron. xi. 22.*

And Eder.] Which *Eusebius* calls *Edgal*. But he hath no more to say of it; nor of *Jagur*, and the rest that follow, but that they were in the Tribe of *Judah*: Nor shall I go about to enquire further after every particular City mentioned; the Number of which is summed up, *Ver. 32.*

Ver. 32. All the Cities are twenty and nine, with their Villages.] If the foregoing Places be told, there are no less than thirty and eight of them. But there were only twenty and nine of them (as some solve the Difficulty) that could be called Cities; the other being only Villages. Or, the Meaning is (as the *Jews* generally think) that twenty and nine only belonged to the Tribe of *Judah*; the rest being afterward given to the Tribe of *Simeon*, as we find in the nineteenth Chapter. Where nine of these very Cities here mentioned, are said to be in that Tribe, *viz. Beer-sheba, Moladah, Hazar-shual, Baalah, Azem, Hormah, Zigleg, Ain, and Rimmon.* Which nine, with the twenty and nine here set down as the Sum Total, make just thirty and eight. And this seems to be the truer Account, because the Villages of other Cities are mentioned, *Ver. 36. and 41.* and yet none of them set down by Name, as is supposed in the first Interpretation of these Words.

Ver. 33. And in their Valley.] Or in the Plain, below the Mountains: But which way, I shall not examine; because the Geography of this Country will be done, I hope, by a better Hand.

Ver. 36. Fourteen Cities, with the Villages.] There are fifteen in all, if we take the two last for distinct Cities. But, in all Probability, there might be one, called indifferently *Gedera*, or (as we translate it in the Margin) *Gederothaim*. Perhaps there might be a double City, the Old and the New: Or, *Gederothaim* was an Appendix to *Gederah*, as the Borough of *Southwark* is to the City of *London*.

Ver. 37. Zenan, and Hadashah, &c.] I suppose these Cities, and all that follow to the forty-first Verse, lay also in the Valley, or Plain.

Ver. 41. Sixteen Cities with their Villages.] There are exactly that Number, among which *Mizpeth, Lachish, Beth-dagon, Eglon, and Makkedah*, were the chief. They seem to have been in the Western Part of this Country, near the Tribe of *Dan*; for the two first in the former Division (*Eshtaol* and *Zoreah*, *Ver. 33.*) were afterwards given to the *Danites*, xix. 41.

Ver. 42. Libnah and Ether, &c.] These two Cities, and those that follow unto *Ver. 45.* were in another Division of the plain Country: Among which, *Lebnah, Keilah, Achzib, and Mareshah*, were the most noble.

Ver.

Ver. 44. *Nine Cities, with their Villages.*] But *Ether* and *Ashan* were afterwards given to the Tribe of *Simeon*, xix. 7. which may seem a Prejudice to the Interpretation which the *Jews* give of ver. 32. Unless we suppose these two Places to be different from them, tho' called by the same Name: As here is Mention made of *Ash-nab* (ver. 43) and there is one of the same Name in the former Division, ver. 33.

Ver. 45. *Ekron, with her Towns, and her Villages.*] The *Hebrew* Word for *Towns* signifies *Daughters*; by which seem to be meant lesser Cities, depending on *Ekron*, with their Villages belonging to them. *Gath* and *Askalon*, perhaps, were such at this Time; tho', in future Times, they grew up to be of more Consideration; which may be the Reason they are not here mentioned. For this, and the two following Verses, describe the Lot of *Judab* in the West, upon the *Mediterranean Sea*; which comprehended all from *Ekron* to the River of *Egypt*.

Ver. 48. *And in the Mountains.*] From the Plain he goes to the Mountains; and distributes the Cities there into five Divisions.

Shamir and Jattir, &c.] In this Division there were eleven Cities; among which was *Kirjath-Sanna* (ver. 49.) which had three Names. See ver. 15.

Ver. 52. *Arab and Dumah, &c.*] In this Division there were nine Cities, ver. 54. Which were in the Mountainous Country, in the Middle of *Judæa*; as those mentioned before and those that follow were. And therefore, it is not true which the *Jews* say, that he reckons up only the Cities in the Skirts of the Country; with which indeed he began. See ver. 21.

Ver. 55. *Maon Carmel, &c.*] This, and the two following Verses, contain an Account of Ten Cities and their Villages, in another Division, two of which were near together; for *Nabal* dwelt in *Maon*, and had great Possessions in *Carmel*, 1 Sam. xxv. 2. There was another *Maon* in the Deserts of *Jeshimon*, 1 Sam. xxiii. 1. as there was another among the *Moabites*, called *Beth-Maon*, the House or Dwelling of *Maon*. The People of which, called *Maonites* and, as some think, *Mebunims* (*Judg.* x. 10, 12. 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 7.) were very powerful, and some time oppressed the *Israelites*. And there was likewise another *Carmel*; for this is not the Place where *Elijah* built an Altar and offered Sacrifices, when he slew the Prophets of *Baal* (1 *Kings* xviii.) but a Place far distant from it; where *Saul* made himself a Place when he returned from the Conquest of the *Amalekites*, (1 Sam. xv. 12.) that is, encamped, as some will have it, and divided the Spoil, or built a triumphant Arch, as St. *Hierom* interprets: And where *Nabal* kept so many Sheep, as are mentioned in the Place fore-named; and is the Place the Prophets mean (as *Bochart* conjectures) when they speak of the Pastures of *Carmel Jer.* l. 19. *Amos* i. 2. *Mic.* vii. 14. See *Hieroicoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 48.

Ver. 57. *Gibeab, and Timnab, &c.*] The first of these Cities, *Conradus Pellicanus* thinks, hath the same Name with that called *Kinab*, ver. 22. tho' it be in a different Place. And indeed, in this Division, consisting of Ten Ci-

ties, there are two whose Names we had before, when he speaks of those in the Skirts of the Country, viz. *Zipb* and *Zanoab*. See ver. 24, 34. Which shews there were many Cities in the same Country of the same Name.

Gibeab and Timnab.] Are known Places. See *Gen.* xxxviii. 12.

Ver. 58. *Halbul, Beth-zur, &c.*] In this and in the following Verse, are contained a small Division of six Cities; the most eminent of which was *Beth-zur* which lay in the Road from *Hierusalem* to *Hebron*, about twenty Miles from it, as St. *Hierom* tells us.

Ver. 60. *Kirjath-baal, &c.*] Here are only two Cities in this Division, the first of which was called *Kirjath-jearim*, as we read xviii. 14. and *Baala*, and *Baal-Judab*, 2 Sam. vii. 2. 1 *Chron.* xiii. 6.

Ver. 61. *In the Wilderness.*] So the *Hebrews* call those Parts of the Country, which were but thinly inhabited; as this was, wherein there were but six Cities. Of this Wilderness of *Judab*, we read frequently in the following Books of Scripture; several Parts of which are mentioned in the History of *David*, when he fled for fear of *Saul*, and lurked in this Country: Particularly in the Wilderness of *Zipb*, 1 Sam. xxiii. 14. and of *Maon*, ver. 24, 25. and of *Engeddi*, one of the Places here mentioned, 1 Sam. xxiv. 1. and there was a Part of the Wilderness not far from *Carmel*, before-mentioned, 1 Sam. xxv. 14.

Ver. 62. *The City of Salt.*] Some take this to be *Zoar*, the little City unto which *Lot* was permitted to flee, at the Destruction of *Sodom*: Which is called the City of Salt; either because it stood near the Salt-Sea, or because *Lot's* Wife was hereabouts turned into a Pillar of Salt.

Ver. 63. *As for the Jebusites, the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Children of Judab could not drive them out.*] This supposes that *Jerusalem* belonged to the Children of *Judab*; and so it did in part, tho' not the whole; for some of it was in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, as shall be observed in its proper Place. The King of this City *Joshua* had vanquished, together with other four Kings of the *Amorites* who joined in Battle with him, *Josh.* x. 5, 23. and in the Conclusion of that Chapter, he is said (ver. 42.) to have taken all these Kings and their Land at one time. But if *Jerusalem* was then taken, as well as the Land about it, the Strong-hold of *Zion* remained still in the Hands of the *Jebusites*. And the *Israelites* not being able presently to people all the Cities they had taken, the *Jebusites* recovered the City of *Jerusalem*, and got Possession of it again; from whence the Children of *Judab* expelled them after the Death of *Joshua*, *Judg.* i. 8. But still Mount *Zion* continued in their Hands, until the Reign of *David*.

But the *Jebusites* dwelt with the Children of *Judab*, at *Jerusalem*, unto this Day.] That is in the Fort of *Zion*, which was a Part of it; where they were so considerable, that the City was called the City of the *Jebusites*, and its Name *Jebus*, *Judg.* xix. 10, 11. There can be no doubt, I think, that these *Jebusites* were of

the Seed of *Canaan*, they being constantly numbered among the seven Nations devoted to Destruction. Yet some of the *Jews* have a Conceit that the People here mentioned were derived from *Abimelech*, King of the *Philistines*; with whom their Forefather *Isaac* made a solemn League; and therefore the Children of *Judab* did not expel them. So *Kimchi*. But this, it is evident, is a foolish Imagination: For why did they expel them at the last, as they did, if they were to be kind to them upon this Account?

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. **T**HE Lot of the Children of *Joseph*.] That is, of *Ephraim*, and that half of the Tribe of *Manasseh*, which was not yet provided for. See ver. 4. One cannot but observe the Providence of God, in bringing up their Lot next to *Judab*'s. For as he had the Prerogative of being made the Chief of all *Jacob*'s Children, *Gen.* xlix. 10. so *Joseph* had the Privilege of the First-born transferred to his Family. And therefore they are considered before any of the other Tribes, except *Judab*.

Fell from Jordan by Jericho.] In the Hebrew, went forth from *Jordan*, by the City of *Jericho*. Which was in the Tribe of *Benjamin*; which Tribe lay between the Tribe of *Judab*, and the Tribe of *Ephraim*.

Unto the Water of Jericho, on the East.] This is justly thought to be the Water mentioned 2 *Kings* ii. 19, 20, 21. whose Spring *Elisha* healed, by which the Plain of *Jericho* was watered. See *Josephus*, Lib. 5. *de Bello Jud.* Cap. 4.

To the Wilderness that goeth up from Jericho throughout Mount Beth-el.] It appears from xviii. 12, 13. that this was the Wilderness of *Beth-aven*.

Ver. 2. *And goeth up from Beth-el to Luz.*] *Beth-el* was a Place so called, because *Jacob* there had the famous Divine Vision, mentioned *Gen.* xvii. It was nigh to the City *Luz*, as appears from the 19th Verse of that Chapter; but was distinct from the City itself, being in the neighbouring Fields, where *Jacob* lay all Night; tho' being so near, it is likely afterward they became one City. But they who would hence infer, that this Book could not be written by *Josua*, because *Luz* was built after his Death in the Land of the *Hittites* (*Judg.* i. 26.) do merely trifle: For it is plain he doth not speak here of that *Luz*, but of the old one: For the Country of the *Hittites* belonged to *Hebron* and *Beersheba*, and the neighbouring Places in the Land of *Judab*; unto which the Author of this Book could have no Respect here in the Description of the Land of *Ephraim*. Therefore, when *Luz* and *Beth-el* are said to be the same, (xviii. 13. and *Judg.* i. 23.) the Meaning can be no more, but that in Length of Time they were united; the Inhabitants of *Luz* going into *Beth-el*. And of such Coalitions of two Cities into one, there are six hundred Examples, as *Huetius* speaks in his *Demonstr. Evang. Propos.* 4. and therefore, I think *Dupin* well translates

this whole Verse in this manner, *From Beth-el-Luz the Border passeth along to Archi-ataroth.*

And passeth along unto the Borders of Archi to Ataroth.] Or rather, the Borders of *Archi-ataroth*, as both the LXX and the Vulgar translate it; and as the Words are in the Hebrew; this being the same City which is afterward called *Ataroth*, ver. 7. it being usual to cut off the former Part of the Names of Cities; as *Bochartus* observes in abundance of Instances; and gives this for one, in his *Phaleg*. Lib. 2. Cap. 24.

Ver. 3. *And goeth down Westward to the Coast of Japhthali.*] It is not known where this Place was, being no where else mentioned; but it was in the Western Part of the Land, toward the Mediterranean.

Unto the Coast of Beth-horon the nether.] See x. 10.

And to Gezer.] This was one of the Levitical Cities in this Tribe of *Ephraim*, *Josh.* xxi. 21. And, as *Is. Casaubon* hath proved at large, it was, in all probability, the City which *Josephus* and the Author of the Book of the *Maccabees* call *Gazara*; and is mentioned as a neighbouring City to *Joppa*, *Azotus*, and *Jamnia*. See his *Annot.* upon Lib. 16. *Strabonis*. P. 261. 262.

And the Goings-out thereof are at the Sea.] The Vulgar hath it, *at the Great Sea*: Which is certainly here meant; this being a short Description of the Lot of this Tribe from *Jordan* on the East, to the Mediterranean on the West.

Ver. 4. *So the Children of Joseph, Manasseh, and Ephraim, took their Inheritance.*] According to the following Measures. Which give a more particular Account of what is before said in general.

Ver. 5. *And the Border of the Children of Ephraim, according to their Families*] And first, he shews what was given to *Ephraim*; reserving the Description of *Manasseh*'s Portion to the next Chapter.

Even the Border of their Inheritance on the East Side.] The North-East. For he describes, tho' grossly, only the Breadth of this Lot from South to North.

Was Ataroth-Addar, unto Beth horon the upper.] The first of those was in the South, and the latter in the North.

Ver. 6. *And the Border went out toward the Sea.*] From *Beth-horon* the upper, this Northern Border went on one Side Westward, toward the Mediterranean.

To Michmethab on the North Side.] And on the other Side Eastward, towards *Jordan*. This is very obscurely expressed; but it appears, from what follows, it must be thus interpreted.

And the Border went about Eastward unto Tannab-Shiloh.] Still proceeded further Eastward, unto this Place; the Name of which only is now known.

And passed by it on the East to Janobab.] Another Place Easterly, of which we are now ignorant. For there are no Records left to make us understand whereabouts in the East it was situated; which was perfectly understood when this Country was inhabited by the *Ephraimites*.

Ver. 7. *And it went down from Janohab to Ataroth, and Naarath, and came to Jericho.*] Not to the very City, for that belonged to Benjamin; but to the Country adjoining.

And went out at Jordan.] Which was the Eastern Bounds of this Country.

Ver. 8. *And the Border went out from Tappuah Westward, unto the River Kanab.*] He returns to describe the Length of it from East to West; if the River or Brook Kanab, be the same with the Brook Cerith, mentioned 1 Kings xvii. 3. And so not only *Adricoinius* understands it, but that great Man *Bochartus*; who observes it was called the Brook *Cberith*, from the Hebrew Word *Cara*, which signifies to eat or feed, because here God commanded the Ravens to feed *Elijah*; and it was called *Kana*, from the Multitude of Reeds which grew there (and so the Vulgar here translate it, *the Valley of Reeds*) in which it may be supposed *Elijah* lay hid. *Hierozycon*, P. 2. L. 2. C. 14. But there is so much to be objected against this Situation of the Brook *Kana*, that I must leave it in Suspense whether it were in the East, or in the West; and confess, with *Conradus Pellicanus*, that as none of the *Hebrews* or *Latins* have given a satisfactory Account of these four last Verses, so I do not pretend to it.

And the Goings-out thereof were at the Sea.] Where *Sea* alone is mentioned, it is commonly understood to signify the *Mediterranean*; which quite overthrows the Opinion, which makes *Kana* the same with *Cberith*. But the Vulgar here took it for the *Salt-Sea*, (adding the Word *Salsissimum*) which favours the fore-named Opinion.

This is the Inheritance of the Tribe of Ephraim by their Families.] A gross Description of it.

Ver. 9. *And the separate Cities for the Children of Ephraim, were among the Inheritance of the Children of Manasseh, &c.*] What these separate Cities were, cannot now be known, because we have not a particular Account given of all the Cities of this Tribe (as we had of *Judah*) but only of those, which were the Limits of their Country. But they seem to have been some Cities in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, which were inhabited by the Children of *Ephraim*, tho' the Territories about them belonged to the *Manassites*, and were occupied by them. See xvii. 8, 9.

Ver. 10. *And they drave not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer, but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites unto this Day.*] The Inhabitants of *Gezer* were properly *Canaanites*; who dwelt unto the Sea-Coast, where *Gezer* was situated. See Ver. 3. This is mentioned also *Judg.* i. 29.

And serve under Tribute.] They so far subdued them, as to make them Tributaries; and, some fancy, imposed on them the Precepts of the Sons of *Noah*. But they ought to have destroyed them, and were forbidden to make Peace with them upon any Conditions. See *Judg.* ii. 1, 2, 3. Unless *Grotius* his Conjecture be true, that the Inhabitants of *Gezer* submitted and accepted the Terms of Peace, which *Joshua* was bound to offer them, before he began the War; as the *Gergasites*, he thinks,

also did; who remained even in our Saviour's Time: For they delivered up themselves at the first Summons to surrender; which is the Reason, he imagines, that they are omitted in the Enumeration of their Enemies, both in xi. 1. and in *Deut.* xx. 17. See his *Annot.* on his 13th Chapter of the second Book *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Sect. 4.

This City, and the People of it, were destroyed in *Solomon's* Time by *Pharoah* King of *Egypt*; who made a Present of it to his Daughter, *Solomon's* Wife; who thereupon rebuilt it, 1 Kings ix. 16, 17. Till then the *Canaanites* lived in it; from whence *Spinoza* would have it concluded, that this Book was not written by *Joshua*, because we find the same thing recorded in the Book of *Judges*, (i. 29.) which is of a later Date. But this is a very frivolous Cavil; for, as *Huetius* well observes, if an Historian should have said in the Life of *Tiberius*, the *Germans* were not destroyed, the same might in like manner have been said in the Life of *Vespasian*; and just so, when *Joshua* saith the *Gazerites* were not cut off by the *Ephraimites*, it did not hinder him that wrote in the following Age from saying the same; because they still remained in the Possession of their antient Habitation.

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. *There was also a Lot for the Tribe of Manasseh.*] That half of it, which had no Portion on the other side *Jordan*.

(*For he was the First-born of Joseph.*)] I cannot make any Sense of this; and therefore think the Particle *ki* should be translated *tho'*, not *for*. And then the Meaning is plain enough, that the Lot of *Manasseh* came up after that of *Ephraim* (not before it) tho' he was the First-born of *Joseph*; for *Jacob* had preferred *Ephraim* before him, *Gen.* xlviii. 19, 20.

For Machir, the First-born of Manasseh.] And his only Son, from whom sprung such a Multitude, that there was no Room for them all, on the other side *Jordan*; but Part of them were to be disposed of here.

The Father of Gilead.] *Numb.* xxvi. 29.

Because he was a Man of War.] This is generally thought to relate to *Machir*; who had done some famous Exploits in the Skirmishes they had with some neighbouring People, while they were in *Egypt*, (see 1 *Chron.* vii. 21, 22.) for he was not alive to fight when they came to *Canaan*.

Therefore he had Gilead and Bashan.] A Share in this Country; for some of it was given to the *Reubenites* and *Gadites*, xiii. 25. but the *Gileadites* were also planted here, (Ver. 31.) for inheriting the Valour of their Progenitor, they were fit to defend this Frontier-Country.

Ver. 2. *And there was also a Lot for the rest of the Children of Manasseh, by their Families.*] A great Part of the *Manassites* being disposed of before they passed over *Jordan*, now follows the Lot which fell to the rest, whose several Families he names.

For the Children of Abiezer, and for the Children of Helek, and for the Children of Afriel,
H 2 and

and for the Children of Shechem; and for the Children of Hepher; and for the Children of Shemidah.] These six Families descended from Gilead, as we read Numb. xxvi. 30, &c. Where the first of them, who is here called Abiezer, is there called Jeazer.

These are the Male Children of Manasseh, the Son of Joseph, by their Families.] He uses the Expression of Male Children, to introduce what follows concerning the Females. And they are called the Children of Manasseh, because they inherited in his Right; being Families descended from him. See Selden de Successionibus, Cap. 22.

Ver. 3. But Zelophehad the Son of Hepher, the Son of Gilead, the Son of Machir, the Son of Manasseh.] Here he recites their Pedigree from the Son of Joseph.

Had no Sons, but Daughters.] And so could not make a Family in Manasseh; and consequently have no Share in the Land.

And these are the Names of his Daughters, Mahlah, and Noah, &c.] See Numb. xxvi. 33.

Ver. 4. And they came near before Eleazar the Priest, and before Joshua the Son of Nun, and before the Princes.] To whom God had committed the Care of dividing the several Lots, xiv. 1. Numb. xxxiv. 17, 18.

Saying, the LORD commanded Moses to give us an Inheritance among our Brethren.] See Numb. xxvii. 6, 7.

Therefore, according to the Commandment of the LORD, he gave them an Inheritance among the Brethren of their Father.] Or, an Inheritance was given them, according to this Commandment of God to Moses, by Eleazar and Joshua, and the rest who were appointed to divide the Land. For after the Lot had determined what Land every Tribe should have, Eleazar, Joshua, and the Princes, considered how many Families there were in the Tribe, and how large they were; and accordingly, divided it among them. So Numb. xxvi. 55, 56. imports.

Ver. 5. And there fell ten Portions to Manasseh.] For there were six Portions given to six Sons: But the Portion of Hepher, the last of them, being divided into five Parts among his five Daughters, there were ten Portions in all. See Selden de Succession. Cap. 23. Which ten Portions being assigned to so many Families, Eleazar, Joshua, and the Princes, were not concerned any further in dividing these ten Portions into lesser, among several Households; but that, I suppose, they agreed among themselves.

Beside the Land of Gilead and Bashan, which were on the other side Jordan.] Mentioned before, Ver. 1.

Ver. 6. Because the Daughters of Manasseh.] That is, of Zelophehad, descended from Manasseh.

Had an Inheritance among his Sons.] Being considered as Heirs to their Father.

And the rest of Manasseh's Sons.] Which were not of the six Families before-mentioned.

Had the Land of Gilead.] On the other side Jordan, as hath been often said; and is again repeated, to prevent all Contentions that might arise about their Portions.

Ver. 7. And the Coast of Manasseh was from Asher to Michmethah, that lived before Shechem.] This was the South Border, which went from a City called Asher, to another called Michmethah; which was over-against a City in the Tribe of Ephraim called Shechem.

And the Border went along on the Right Hand unto the Inhabitants of Entappuah.] And so to those that lived in the Land of Tappuah, leaving Tappuah itself on the Right Hand.

Ver. 8. Now Manasseh had the Land of Tappuah.] All the Territory adjoining to this City, belonged to the Tribe of Manasseh.

But Tappuah on the Border of Manasseh belonged to the Children of Ephraim.] But the City itself, which lay on the Confines of their Country, was one of those separated Cities spoken of in the foregoing Chapter, (Ver. 9.) in which the Children of Ephraim dwelt.

Ver. 9. And the Coast descended unto the River Kanah, Southward of the River.] Concerning this Place, see Ver. 8. of the foregoing Chapter.

These Cities of Ephraim are among the Cities of Manasseh.] That is, the Cities on the Coast before-mentioned were inhabited by the Ephraimites, as well as Tappuah; tho' they were in the Tribe of Manasseh. For these two Tribes were nearer of Kin than any other; and so greater Friendship was intended to be established between them.

The Coast also of Manasseh was on the North Side of the River.] By the Coast of Manasseh, is meant the Cities inhabited by the Manassites; which were all on the North Side of this River. As all those on the South Side of it, tho' belonging to the Manassites, were inhabited by the Children of Ephraim.

And the Goings-out of it were at the Sea.] The Coast mentioned in the Beginning of the Verse, ended at the Mediterranean Sea.

Ver. 10. Southward it was Ephraim's, and Northward it was Manasseh's, and the Sea is his Border.] These Words express how these two Tribes lay, with respect to each other: Ephraim on the South, and Manasseh on the North; and both bounded on the West by the Mediterranean.

And they met together in Asher on the North, and in Issachar on the East.] Tho' on the South the Tribe of Manasseh was wholly joined to the Tribe of Ephraim, yet on the North-West, towards the great Sea, it had the Tribe of Asher on the Confines of it; and on the East, (towards Jordan and the Sea of Tiberias) the Tribe of Issachar. So Conradus Pellicanus rightly explains these Words. For both the Tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh could not touch these other Tribes.

Ver. 11. And Manasseh had in Issachar and in Asher.] As Ephraim had some Towns in the Tribe of Manasseh, so Manasseh had some in the Tribes of Issachar and Asher, unto whom, in the North-West, and the East, they were near Neighbours.

Beth-shean and her Towns.] This was a Place not far from the Sea of Tiberias before-mentioned, and near Jordan.

And

And Ibleam and her Towns.] It appears by 2 Kings ix. 27. that it was not far from Megiddo, mentioned in the latter End of this Verse.

The Inhabitants of Dor and her Towns.] Concerning Dor, see xi. 2. whose Inhabitants (as also those of the other Cities following) are here mentioned; because, it seems, they possessed the People (whom they ought to have destroyed) as well as their Cities and Towns, making them their Slaves.

And the Inhabitants of Endor, and her Towns.] The City whither Saul went to consult with the Witch. It was not far from Mount Tabor; which was in the Confines of the Tribe of Issachar.

And the Inhabitants of Tanach, and her Towns.] This City lay not far from the other; and was one of those given to the Levites, xxi. 25.

And the Inhabitants of Megiddo, and her Towns.] This was near the former; not far from the Brook Kishon, Judg. v. 19.

Even three Countries.] Or rather, three Parts of those Countries before-mentioned.

Ver. 12. *Yet the Children of Manasseh could not drive out the Inhabitants of those Cities.]* Thro' Want of Faith in God, and of Zeal to perform his Commands; which made them slack in their Attempts to expel the Inhabitants of this Country.

But the Canaanites would dwell in that Land.] Finding themselves strong enough to maintain it, against such feeble Endeavours, as they used to conquer it.

Ver. 13. *Yet it came to pass, when the Children of Israel were waxen strong, that they put the Canaanites to Tribute.]* When they were more numerous and expert in War, not only the Manassites, but they of other Tribes also brought the Canaanites to be Tributaries to them.

But did not utterly drive them out.] In which they grievously offended against God's Command, Deut. xx. 16, 17, 18.

Ver. 14. *And the Children of Joseph spake unto Joshua.]* Both they of Ephraim, and they of Manasseh, Ver. 17.

Saying, Why hast thou given me but one Lot and one Portion to inherit, seeing I am a great People.] They were discontented with their Lot, which they thought too strait for them; because they were so very numerous, that the Country which was assigned them, was little enough for one of them.

Forasmuch as the LORD hath blessed me hitherto.] Multiplied them exceedingly, as appears from Numb. xxvi. 34, 37.

Ver. 15. *And Joshua answered them, If thou be a great People.]* Tho' he was their Flesh and Blood, yet Joshua would not humour them; but returns their Argument upon them, that since they were so great a People, they should do as here follows.

Then get thee up to the Wood Country.] Which was in the Highlands, Ver. 18. which is full of Trees; For *Aba*, as Bochart observes, signifies very thick Woods, Lib. 2. *Canaan*, Cap. 9.

And cut down for thy self there.] Make it habitable.

In the Land of the Perizzites.] Who were a rough uncivilized People, living in these mountainous Forests; as Bochart gathers from this Place; and thinks they had their Name from thence. Because they did not live in Cities and Towns, but in those *Pagi* that were in the Woods; which the Hebrews call *Pherazoth*; from whence the *Pagani*; the People who lived in those Places, were called *Pherazim*, Lib. 4. *Phaleg*. Cap. 36.

And of the Giants.] There were some of the *Rephaim* (as the Hebrew Word is) still remaining here; or it was a Place where they had been wont to dwell.

If Mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee.] If that noble Mount which was given them for their Portion, with the rest of the Land before-mentioned (which is included in the Name of Mount Ephraim, the principal Part being put for the whole) did not afford them Room enough, he exhorts them to enlarge their Bounds, by taking in these Wood-lands before-mentioned.

Ver. 16. *And the Children of Joseph said, The Hill is not enough for us.]* They still insisted, that if they could get Possession of the woody Mountain, and destroy all the Inhabitants, and cut down all the Trees, it would not be sufficient to contain them.

And all the Canaanites that dwelt in the Land of the Valley.] But if it would, they further alledge, they had no Hope to conquer it; because, before they could come at it, they must encounter those that lived in the Valley below it, who were too strong for them.

Have Chariots of Iron.] Before which they were not able to stand: For he doth not mean Chariots made of Iron, but armed with Iron; which the Ancients called *currus falcati*, in Greek *δρεπανοφόροι* having a kind of Scythes of two Cubits fastned to long Axle-Trees on both Wheels; which being driven swiftly thro' a Body of Men, made great Slaughter, mowing them down like Grass or Corn. *Xenophon* gives a Description of them in his *Cyro-Pædia*, Lib. 6. and *Quintus Curtius*, Lib. 4. Cap. 9. *Vegetius* also, *de Re Militari*, Lib. 3. Cap. 24. *Bonfrerius* hath heaped up abundance on this Subject; and so hath *Job. Cunradus Dietericus* in his *Antiq. Biblicæ*, P. 329, &c. where he observes *Xenophon* imagined *Cyrus* to have been the Inventor of these Chariots; which had been in use among the *Canaanites* eight hundred Years before.

Both they who are of Beth-shean and her Towns, and they who are in the Valley of Jezreel.] Which Cities, it seems, lay near to this Mountain, unto which Joshua directed them, and both of them possessed by the *Canaanites*.

Ver. 17. *And Joshua spake unto the House of Joseph, even unto Ephraim and Manasseh.]* He was not moved, by their Objections, from his Resolution; but told them.

Thou art a great People, and hast great Power.] That, by their own Confession, they were very numerous; and consequently, of great Power.

Thou shalt not have one Lot only.] And therefore need not be straitned in their Habitation; which they said was not sufficient for one Tribe.

Ver.

Ver. 18. *But the Mountain shall be thine.]* For they should have the Mountain added to their Portion ; which he could not enlarge any other way, it being settled by a divine Decree.

For it is a Wood, and thou shalt cut it down.] Or, *tho'* it be a Wood, yet they could cut it down, and grub it up ; and then it would afford a commodious Habitation.

And the Goings-out of it shall be thine.] They should have the Product of it : Or, all the Country below in the Valley (Ver. 16.) should be theirs also.

And thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, tho' they have Iron Chariots, and tho' they be strong.] He answers all their Objections (Ver. 16.) with an Assurance that they should be able, with God's Help, to dispossess the present Inhabitants, notwithstanding their great Force and Power : For so God had commanded them to believe, and not to be afraid of their Chariots, which now seemed so terrible to them. See Deut. xx. 1.

C H A P. XVIII.

Ver. 1. **A**ND the whole Congregation of the Children of Israel.] All their Elders and Heads of their Tribes, who represented the People of Israel ; and are sometimes meant by the whole Congregation, as Corn. Bertram hath shewed in many Instances, particularly in 1 Chr. xiii. 1, 2, &c. See L. de Repub. Judaica, in the latter End of Cap. 6. and Cap. 11. But here it may well signify the whole Body of the People, who accompanied the Ark to settle it in a new Place.

Assembled together at Shiloh.] A Place in the Tribe of Ephraim, not far from Jerusalem ; and, as the great Primate of Ireland thinks, the same with Salem. But I do not find any Ground for that Opinion.

And set up the Tabernacle of the Congregation there.] Which had hitherto remained in Gilgal ; but now, by God's Order, no doubt, (for he was to choose the Place of his own Residence, Deut. xii. 5, 11, 14. &c. was removed hither ; together with the Camp of Israel, which tarried so long in Gilgal, merely because the Tabernacle was there. If it be enquired, what Token God gave of his Choice of this Place, Mr. Mede answers (Discourse XLV. Book 1.) perhaps it was by giving some extraordinary Token of his Approbation, by accepting their Sacrifices ; or, it may be, they consulted him in this Case by the Oracle of Urim and Thummim. For when he made Choice of Mount Sion, an Angel bad the Prophet Gad tell David he should set up an Altar in the Threshing-floor of Ornan ; and there God answered him by Fire, &c. See 1 Chron. xxi. 18, 26. Now the Reason of its being translated to Shiloh, it is likely, was because it would have been too far, after the Division of the Land, for all the Tribes of Israel to go to Gilgal, to perform all that the Law required to be done at the Tabernacle. Which was now indispensibly to be performed, tho' while they lived in the Wilderness, they did not live by these Rules, (Deut. xii. 8, 9, 10.) and

perhaps while they continued unsettled in Canaan, could not exactly observe them. This Place also was very convenient for all the Tribes to resort unto ; and likewise very safe, being guarded by the two powerful Tribes of Judah and Ephraim. And it was, as I said, in the Lot of the latter ; for it was fit it should be where Joshua was ; who, being of this Tribe, lived among them. Here it is thought the Tabernacle continued for the Space of three hundred and fifty Years, till the Days of Samuel ; but our Primate before-mentioned reckons no more than three hundred and twenty-eight Years.

And the Land was subdued before them.] Or rather, for the Land was subdued, &c. that is, continued quiet, without any Opposition from the old Inhabitants, since the Conquest mentioned, xi. 23.

Ver. 2. *And there remained among the Children of Israel seven Tribes, which had not yet received their Inheritance.]* For whom no Lot had been drawn at Gilgal. The Reason of which, was, perhaps, because the last-mentioned Tribes, of the House of Joseph, were not satisfied with the Division which was begun to be made there. And therefore Joshua stopp'd his Proceedings till he had made a new Survey of the whole Country. In order to which, God commanded him to remove hither ; from whence, being in the middle of the Country, they might do it more easily ; and also give the Children of Joseph greater Content, by settling God's House among them.

Ver. 3. *And Joshua said unto the Children of Israel.]* Unto the Congregation before-mentioned, Ver. 1.

How long are you slack to go and possess the Land, which the LORD God of your Fathers hath given you ?] He doth not blame them for not taking Possession of the Land which was conquered, without God's Direction, by a Lot (for that was expressly commanded) but for their being so slow to consider of, and propound, some Means of making such an equal Division, as they desired ; that they might take Possession of the Land, where their Lot should fall.

Ver. 4. *Give out from among you three Men for each Tribe.* He therefore himself propounds a Method for their Satisfaction ; and such an one as they could not dislike, viz. that they should chuse three Men (for he would not appoint them, but only give them Orders what to do) out of each of the seven remaining Tribes that were not provided for ; or rather, out of the nine Tribes and an half ; that they who had already received their Portion, might be willing to resign up some Part of it, if they found, upon the Survey, there was not sufficient left for their Brethren.

And I will send them, and they shall rise, and go thro' the Land.] Give them Orders to go immediately thro' the whole Country ; both that which was divided, and that which was not.

And describe it.] Set down not only the Dimensions of it, but its Condition and Quality ; whether barren or fruitful, mountainous or plain, &c.

According

According to the Inheritance of them.] Making so many Parts in the Description, as there remain Tribes that want their Inheritance. Thus the next Verse teaches us to explain it.

And they shall come again to me.] Make their Report to him, when they had done, that he might judge of it.

Ver. 5. *And they shall divide it into seven Parts.]* Of equal Extent, with a just Respect, as *Josephus* observes, not merely to the Quantity of Ground, but the Goodness of the Soil. But there was no Respect to the greater or lesser Number of Persons in each Tribe; for then these Men had given each Tribe their Portion, and there had been no need of a Lot. Their Business was to divide the Country into seven equal Portions and leave God to appoint which Portion shall fall to each Tribe: Who would have no Reason to complain, when the Division was made by themselves.

Judah shall abide in their Coast on the South, and the House of Joseph shall abide in their Coasts on the North.] But the Lot of *Judah*, which was Southerly, and the Lot of *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*, which, with respect to the former were Northerly, were not to be altered. But these Tribes were to remain undisturbed in their Possessions, unless it should be found, that they had more than they needed, and others had less. For this was the very Reason of Making a new and more exact Survey of the Country, than had been made before the first Division; that there might be an Allotment made more to every one's Satisfaction; when they had a more perfect Account of all the Land. Accordingly it is evident, that the Tribe of *Judah* (by common Consent, no doubt) parted with some of their Portion to the *Simeonites*, and the *Danites*, whose Lot appeared to be too scanty, xix. 29, 41.

Ver. 6. *Ye shall therefore describe the Land into seven Parts, and bring the Description hither to me.]* When the Men, who were appointed to measure the Country, had divided it into seven Parts, he orders that the Description, thus divided, should be laid before him.

That I may cast Lots for you here before the LORD.] Whereby their Possessions were settled and established by a Divine Authority. For the Lots being drawn before the Sanctuary, God was desired to declare what Portion every Tribe should have. Accordingly, it was their Duty to look upon it as a sacred Appointment, and to be contented with it; for it was done at the very Door of the Tabernacle, as we read, xix. ult.

Ver. 7. *But the Levites have no Part among you for the Priesthood of the LORD is their Inheritance.]* He declared, what had been often said before, that in this Division of the Land, the Priests and Levites were to have no Share; God having otherwise provided for them. See xiii. 14, 32. xiv. 3.

And Gad and Reuben, and half the Tribe of Manasseh, have received their Inheritance beyond Jordan, &c.] And as for the rest, no Care was to be taken of them in this Division; because *Moses* had provided for them before they came over *Jordan*.

Ver. 8. *And the Men arose, and went away.]* Being chosen by their Brethren (as *Joshua* directed ver. 4.) to act in their Name.

And Joshua charged them that went to describe the Land, saying, Go, and walk through the Land, and describe it, &c.] Before they went, *Joshua* gave them a Charge to do the Business they went about, with Care and Fidelity; using their best Diligence to be truly and fully informed: And at their Return, give him an Account; that he might put an End to all Disputes, by desiring God to assign every Tribe their Portion.

That I may here cast Lots for you before the LORD in Shiloh.] These Words sound as if he gave this Charge to them in the Presence of God, before the Sanctuary; that they might be excited to execute his Orders with greater Diligence.

Ver. 9. *And the Men went and passed thro' the Land.]* Thro' the whole Country, which they had conquered.

And described it by Cities.] Set down the Name of every City, and its Villages, and the Territory about it, with its Situation. For so, I suppose, *Joshua* charged them.

Into seven Parts in a Book.] In which were seven Maps, as we now call them; which made a Chorographical Description of all the Cities, Towns, Mountains, Plains, Woods, and all other Conditions of the Soil.

And came again to Joshua to the Host at Shiloh.] For the Tabernacle being removed hither, the Camp followed it, as I observed, ver. 1. And here it remained till the Land was divided among the seven Tribes. Which could not be done in a short time; for *Josephus* saith they were seven Months in taking this Survey, and making the forenamed Description.

Ver. 10. *And Joshua.]* With the Assistance of *Eleazer* and the Princes, xiv. 1.

Cast Lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD.] As he told them he would, ver. 6. The Manner of it, see upon *Numb.* xxvi. 55, 56.

And there Joshua divided the Land unto the Children of Israel according to their Divisions.] That is, according to the Divisions made by the Surveyors; which were so just and equal, that all consented the Lot should determine what Part should belong to them.

Ver. 11. *And the Lot of the Tribe of Benjamin came up.]* The Providence of God so ordered it, that his Children should have the first Lot of these seven, next to the Children of *Joseph*; they two being the only Sons of *Rachel*, *Jacob's* beloved Wife.

According to their Families.] To be divided according to their Families.

And the Coast of their Lot came forth between the Children of Judah.] Who lay on the South of them.

And the Children of Joseph.] For the *Ephraimites* lay on the North of them. And it is observable, that in the Blessing of *Moses*, *Benjamin* is placed between *Judah* and *Joseph* (*Levi* having no Inheritance among them) which Prophecy of *Moses* by this Lot, was exactly fulfilled concerning him, *Deut.* xxxiii. 12.

Ver. 12. *And their Border on the North Side was from Jordan, and the Border went up to the Side of Jericho, on the North Side.*] Just thus the South Border of Ephraim proceeded from Jordan by Jericho, which was in the Tribe of Benjamin. See xvi. 1, 7.

And went up thro' the Mountain Westward.] Thro' the mountainous Country, which lay on the North of Jericho, it went up to the Western Part of the Country.

And the Goings-out thereof were at the Wilderness of Bethaven.] A Place near Beth-el; which in After-times (when they committed foul Idolatry there) was called Beth-aven, an House or Place of Iniquity, Hosea iv. 15. x. 8.

Ver. 13. *And the Border went out from thence towards Luz, to the Side of Luz (which is Beth-el) Southward.*] On the South Side of that City. See xvi. 2. The Jews think there were two Beth-els; one here named in the Confines of Benjamin and Joseph, where Jacob had the Vision of the Ladder reaching up to Heaven; and the other Beth-el near to Ai, viii. 6, 17.

And the Border descended to Ataroth-adar.] Called in the Place forenamed, xvi. 2. *Archiataroth.*

Near the Hill that lieth on the South Side of the nether Beth-boron.] A City in the Tribe of Ephraim, xvi. 3. called the nether, because there was an higher hard by it, in the Mountain adjoining. Tho' others will have the two Beth-borons to have been at a great Distance, one in the Mountains of Ephraim, the other in the Valley near Jordan.

Ver. 14. *And the Border was drawn thence.*] In a Line bending Westward, as appears by what follows in the End of the Verse; which tells us the Western Border began from Beth-boron the nether.

And compasseth the Corner of the Sea Southward, from the Hill that lieth before Beth-boron.] I cannot give any Account of this Border, according to our Translation: For, it is certain, it did not compass any Corner of the Mediterranean (and no other Sea can be here meant) nor came near unto it. Therefore, by *Peath*, which we translate Corner, must be understood the Side of the Sea. As if he had said, it ran along in a parallel Line to the Sea. So the Vulgar hath it, *over-against the Sea*; and the LXX to the same Purpose. And the Word *Southward* is joined by Vulgar, not to the Sea, but to the next Words, Southward from the Hill that lieth before Beth-boron.

Southward.] That is, the Hill was to the South of Beth-boron, as we read in the Verse before.

And the Goings out thereof were at Kirjath-baal (which is Kirjath-jearim a City of Judah.)] See xv. 60.

This was the West Quarter.] Here the *Peath* before-mentioned (for it is the same Word we before translate Corner) the West Side, or Quarter, ended: For that is meant by its *Goings out*.

Ver. 15. *And the South Quarter.*] The same Word again in the Hebrew, viz. *Peath*.

Was from the End of Kirjath-jearim, and the Border went out on the West.] Did not go di-

rectly South, but bordered something towards the Sea till it came to the *Well of Waters of Nephtoab*, as this Verse concludes. See xv. 9. By considering of which, and the foregoing and following Verses, it will be unnecessary to say much of this South Border of Benjamin; it being the same with the North Border of Judah. For the very same Places are named here, that are there, and in the same Order; with this Difference only, that in describing this Border, he proceeds from the West toward the East; but in describing that of Judah from the East toward the West. So that Kirjath-jearim is there the North Limits of Judah; as it is here the South Limits of Benjamin.

Ver. 16. *And the Border came down to the End of the Mountain that lieth before the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, &c.*] See xv. 8.

And descended to En-rogel.] See xv. 7.

Ver. 17. *And was drawn from the North, and went forth to En-shemesh, and went forth towards Geliloth.*] See there; where this Place is called Gilgal.

Which is over-against the going up to Adummim, and descended to the Stone of Bohan, the Son of Reuben.] See there, and ver. 6.

Ver. 18. *And passed along towards the Side of Arabah Northward: and went down unto Arabab.*] Called Beth-arabah, xv. 6. and so the LXX have it here in this Verse.

Ver. 19. *And the Border passed along to the Side of Beth-hoglab Northward.*] Leaving Beth-hoglab on the North of it, see xv. 6.

And the Out-goings of the Border were at the North Bay of the Salt Sea.] Its utmost Progress was to the Tongue or Bay of the Salt Sea, which is on the North Part of it.

At the South End of Jordan.] Where Jordan ends towards the South; being swallowed up by the Salt Sea.

This was the South Coast.] That is, hither it reached, and here it ended.

Ver. 20. *And Jordan was the Border of it on the East Side.*] Till, near Jericho, it met with the Bounds of the Tribe of Ephraim and Manasseh.

This was the Inheritance of the Children of Benjamin, by the Coasts thereof round about.] That is, a Description of its Bounds, on all Sides.

According to their Families.] Which was divided among as many Families, as were in that Tribe.

Ver. 21. *Now the Cities of the Tribe of the Children of Benjamin, according to their Families, were Jericho.*] Having given a Description of the Bounds of the Country, he sets down the principal Cities in it. The first of which was well known, viz. Jericho; the Territory of which remained, tho' the City itself was destroyed. And perhaps there were some Houses there, tho' without Walls or Gates; which seem to be the only Things which Joshua commanded should not be built, vi. 26.

And Beth-hoglab.] A City nigh to Jericho; not far from the River Jordan.

And the Valley of Keziz.] Rather, Emer-Keziz; for he speaks of a City, not of a Valley.

Valley. Or, it may be interpreted, *Keziz* in the Valley ; that is, in the Plain of *Jericho*.

Ver. 22. *And Beth-arabath.*] This City is reckoned to *Judab*, xv. 61. being, it seems, in the Confines of both Tribes. It stood also in the Plain of *Jericho*, signifying as much as *Domus Campestris*, an Habitation in the Fields : For there were large Fields about it, as *Bochartus* supposes ; from whence a Place in *Affyria*, for this Reason, was called *Oraba*, as he shews, Lib. 4. *Phaleg*. Cap. 21.

And Zemaraim.] A City, it is probable, built by *Zemari*, the tenth Son of *Canaan*, Gen. x. 18. There was a Mountain also called by this Name ; from this City, it is likely. For tho' it is said to be in Mount *Ephraim*, 2 *Chron.* xiii. 14. It might also, in part, belong to *Benjamin* ; as *Betharaba* and the next Cities did belong to two Tribes.

And Beth-el.] A City in the Confines of the Tribe of *Ephraim* and of *Benjamin* ; which seems to have belonged to both.

Ver. 23. *And Avim, and Parah, and Ophrab.*] We know no more of these Cities but their Names.

Ver. 24. *And Cephar-baamonai, and Ophni.*] These also are unknown Cities.

And Gaba.] This is often named in Scripture, and called *Gibeab* ; being that Place where the foul Fact was committed, which almost ruined this Tribe, *Judg.* xix. And is called *Gibeab* of *Saul* ; because it was his native Country ; where he made his Residence, after he was King, 1 *Sam.* x. 26. And it was one of the Cities of the Priests, *Josh.* xxi. 17.

Twelve Cities, with their Villages.] Which seem to have been in the Eastern Part of their Country.

Ver. 25. *Gibeon, and Ramah, and Beeroth.*] The first of these is well known from the Story of its ancient Inhabitants, related in the ninth Chapter of this Book. It was also a City of the Priests, xxi. 17. and seated on a Hill, as its very Name imports. *Ramah* also was an eminent City on the North Side of *Jerusalem*, as *Bethlehem* was on the South. So that *Jerusalem* was in the Road from the one to the other ; as appears from the Man that went from *Bethlehem-Judab* to *Ramah*, *Judg.* xix. 2, 11, 13.

Beeroth also is notorious upon this Account, that it was one of the Cities which cunningly joined with *Gibeon* to deceive *Joshua* and procure a Peace with them, ix. 17.

Ver. 26. *And Mizpeh.*] There were several Cities of this Name, as I have noted before, xv. 38. and this was in the Confines of the Tribe of *Judab* ; so that it seems to have belonged both to them, and to *Benjamin*, as several others did.

And Cephirah.] Another of the Cities depending upon *Gibeon*, ix. 17.

And Mozab.] An unknown City.

Ver. 27. *And Rekem.*] This is a City mentioned both by *Eusebius* and *St. Hierom* ; but they do not say where it was, nor so much as name the two next, *Irpeel* and *Taralah*.

Ver. 28. *And Zelab, Eleph.*] Two Cities, of which no more than the Names are remaining. *Eusebius* and *St. Hierom* mention the

former as in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, but say no more.

And Jebusi, which is Jerusalem.] See xv. 63. where it is reckoned to the Tribe of *Judab* ; for both that Tribe and *Benjamin* had an Interest in it. The old City belonged to the Tribe of *Benjamin* ; unto which an Addition being made, it belonged to *Judab*, (as some make account) that is, the North Part, with Mount *Moriab*, was in the Portion of *Benjamin* ; but the South Part, wherein Mount *Sion* was, belonged to *Judab*.

Gibeab.] This was a distinct City from *Gaba*, Ver. 24. and I suppose near to *Jerusalem*.

And Kirjath. The very Name imports a City : Which, *Eusebius* and *St. Hierom* say, was under the Metropolis of *Gibeath*, fore-mentioned. Πόλις ὑπὸ Μητρόπολιν Λαβθαά.

Fourteen Cities, with their Villages.] Which were in the Western Part of this Tribe.

This is the Inheritance of the Children of Benjamin.] Which was one of the smallest, with respect to the Quantity of Ground which they possessed ; but the Soil was the richest of all other Tribes, as *Josephus* informs us.

According to their Families.] All the Families of the *Benjamites* were disposed of into these great Cities, and the Territories belonging to them ; in which, it is probable, there were lesser Cities, not here named. For we find two Cities of the Priests in this Tribe, which are not among those here set down, viz. *Anathoth*, and *Almon*, xxi. 18.

C H A P. XIX.

Ver. 1. **A**ND the second Lot came forth to *Simeon*, even for the Tribe of the Children of *Simeon*.] Both the LXX. and the Vulgar leave out the latter Part of these Words, as if they were superfluous ; and only say, *the second Lot came forth from Simeon*. But I suppose the Words following in the *Hebrew*, are intended to shew, that tho' their Inheritance was within that of the Tribe of *Judab* (as the next Word tells us) yet those Cities were not all that were given to this Tribe, but they had another Share by Lot that fell to them : And God disposed it so, that the very next Lot to *Benjamin* came up for them ; *Simeon* being the eldest Son of *Jacob* that was unprovided.

According to their Families.] Which was divided by *Eleazar*, *Joshua*, and the Princes among their several Families.

And their Inheritance was within the Inheritance of the Tribe of Judab.] So we well translate it ; for tho' the Word in the *Hebrew* be *betoch* (in the midst) of the Inheritance of *Judab* ; yet it signifies no more than *within*. For the Lot of *Simeon* did not lie in the very Heart (as we speak) but in the Skirts of the Country of *Judab* : From whose Northern and Western Border some Part was cut off, and given to the *Simeonites* ; for the Reason mentioned, Ver. 9.

Ver. 2. *And they had in their Inheritance Beer-sheba; and Sheba.*] Or rather, *Beer-sheba*, which is *Sheba*: For they were one and the same Place; sometimes called at length *Beersheba*, and sometimes contracted in *Sheba*: Nothing being more common than to cut off the Beginning of the Names of Towns, and Places, as *Bochartus* hath shewn in many Instances, in his *Phaleg*. Lib. 2. Cap. 24. which he repeats in his *Hieroicoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 15. And certainly it is so here; for otherwise it would not have been said, Ver. 6. there were *Thirteen* Cities in all, but *Fourteen*; for there are so many if *Sheba* be distinct from *Beer-sheba*. Which was the last City in the South belonging to the Land of *Israel*. From whence the common Saying, *from Dan to Beer-sheba*, to express the whole Length of the Country; from *Dan* in the North, to *Beer-sheba* in the South.

And Moladab.] This is mentioned before, in the Account we had of the Lot of *Judab*, xv. 26.

Ver. 3. *And Hazar-shual.*] A Place where there was abundance of Foxes.

And Balab.] The same that is mentioned in the South of *Judab*, xv. 29.

And Azem.] It signifies in *Hebrew* great Strength. We read of it no where else but in this Place, and 1 *Chron.* iv. 29. where it is called *Ezem*.

Ver. 4. *And El-tolad.*] Called there *Tolad*; the first Syllable being cut off, as I said Ver. 2. it often is.

And Bethul.] Called there *Bethuel*. Which some will have to be the same with *Bethulia*, where *Judith* dwelt; because she was of the Tribe of *Simeon*. But that is a Mistake; for this was in the South of *Judab*, and that a City in *Galilee*.

And Hormab.] Which is mentioned in the same Place, 1 *Chron.* iv. 30. and was one of the Cities, to whom *David* sent Part of the Spoil he took from the *Amalekites*, 1 *Sam.* xxx. 30.

Ver. 5. *And Ziglag.*] A neighbouring City, as appears from both the forementioned Places.

And Beth-marcaboth, and Hazar-sufab.] It is a very probable Conjecture of *Bochartus*, that these were two of the Cities, where *Solomon* kept his Chariots and Horses, 1 *Kings* x. 26. For the former of these signifies the House of Chariots; and the other, the Village of Horses. For it is called *Hazar-Sufin*, in the Plural Number, 1 *Chron.* iv. 31. See *Hieroicoicon*, P. 1. L. 2. C. 9.

Ver. 6. *And Beth-lebaoth, ana Sharuben.*] They seem to be the same Cities, called in After-times *Beth-birei*, and *Shaaraim*, 1 *Chron.* iv. 31.

Thirteen Cities, and their Villages.] See Ver. 1.

Ver. 7. *Ain, Remmon, and Ether, and Ashan.*] One of these Towns is otherwise called in 1 *Chr.* iv. 32. viz. *Etam*, not *Ether*; and a fifth is added. Which shews all the Cities and Towns belonging to *Simeon*, are not here mentioned; no more than all those belonging to *Benjamin*; as I observed on Ver. 28. of the foregoing Chapter. *Ashan* also is thought by *Bochart* (in the Place before-named) to be the same with *Chor-ashan* in 1 *Sam.* xxx. 30. by cutting off the first Syllable.

Four Cities, and their Villages.] Which are mentioned separate from the rest; either because they were in another Part of the Country; or because they were not properly Cities, but only *Chatserim* (large Villages) as they are expressly called, 1 *Chron.* iv. 32. that is, Towns which were without Walls. Here indeed they are called *Cities*; but that must be understood largely, to make it agree with the *Chronicles*, for Towns of more than ordinary Bigness.

Ver. 8. *And all the Villages that were round about these Cities.*] Here the Word *Chatserim* (Villages) is opposed to *Cities*; and signifies all the Towns great and small, that lay about all the Cities before-mentioned.

To Baalab-beer Ramath.] This is the Name but of one City, called simply *Baal* in 1 *Chron.* iv. 33. and is that City in the Tribe of *Judab*, mentioned xv. Ver. 24. or Ver. 29. As far as which City the Bounds of the Tribe of *Simeon* reached. Some think this is the City which *Solomon* built, i. e. repaired, and made larger and stronger, 1 *Kings* ix. 18.

On the South.] This doth not relate to the Situation of the City before-mentioned; but of the Inheritance of this Tribe; which was on the South of *Judab*.

Ver. 9. *Out of the Portion of the Children of Judab was the Inheritance of Simeon.*] For which Reason the Bounds of this Tribe on all Sides are not described, as of the foregoing; because that was sufficiently done in the Description of the Possession of *Judab*; out of which the Inheritance of this Tribe was taken.

For the Part of the Children of Judab was too much for them.] They who were sent to make a new Survey of the whole Land, found that the former Surveyors had not measured it exactly; but left one Division too big in Proportion to the rest; which fell to the Tribe of *Judab*: Who had now, therefore, a large Slice cut from them; because they had too much, and others too little.

Therefore the Children of Simeon had their Inheritance, within the Inheritance of them.] Within that Lot, which was at first given to the Tribe of *Judab*: Yet not absolutely given, but so that if it appeared there was not sufficient for the rest of their Brethren, and they had more than enough; that Error should be corrected, by taking something from them, and giving it to another Tribe; as it was now in this new Allotment.

Ver. 10. *And the third Lot came up for Zebulun, according to their Families.*] He was not the next Brother; for *Issachar* was born before him. But he is mentioned before *Issachar*, both in the Blessing of *Jacob*, *Gen.* xlix. 13. and of *Moses*, *Deut.* xxxiii. 18.

And the Border of their Inheritance was to Sarid.] No more is said of this Place by *Eusebius*, but that it was ὁρίων Ζαβουλων the Bound or Limit of *Zebulun*; and *St. Hierom* saith the same. And, by what follows, it seems to have been the South-West Border.

Ver. 11. *And their Border went up toward the Sea.*] That is, the *Mediterranean*, which was in the West.

And Maralah, and reacheth to Dabbasheth.] These were Cities in the Western Borders, as appears by the following Words.

And reacheth to the River that is before Jokneam.] See xii. 22.

Ver. 12. *And turned from Sarid Eastward toward the Sun rising.]* This is the Description of the South Border; which went from Sarid in the West, unto Jordan in the East.

Unto the Border of Chisloth-tabor.] A City near Mount Tabor in the Tribe of Issachar, ver. 18. For, as on the West the Zebulonites were contiguous to the Tribe of Manasseh; so, toward the East, they were to the Tribe of Issachar.

And then goeth out to Deborah.] A City also in the Tribe of Issachar, xxi. 28.

And goeth up to Japhia.] It is uncertain where this City was, tho' some think it to be the strong City which Josephus called Japha (L. 2. de Bello Jud. Cap. 25.) and places it in Galilee near Jotapata.

Ver. 13. *And from thence passeth on along on the East to Gittah-hepber.]* This seems to be a Description of the Eastern Border. We read of the Land of Hepher, 1 Kings iv. 10. which was near the Sea of Galilee. There this City was, in which Jonah the Prophet was born, 2 Kings xiv. 25.

And Ittah Cazin.] This City, it is likely, was upon the same Sea of Galilee, called Genesaret; which the Vulgar calls Thacasin.

And goeth out to Remmon-methoar, to Neah.] Here the Eastern Border ended (for that is meant by the Phrase *goeth out*) at the Sea of Genesaret. So Josephus expressly affirms. See Gen. xlix. 13.

Ver. 14. *And the Border compasseth it on the North Side to Hannathon.]* Here begins the Description of the Northern Border; which from the last named Place, went in a bending Line towards Hannathon; a City, it is supposed, in this Tribe.

And the Out-goings thereof are in the Valley of Jiphtah-el.] Here the Northern Border ended. But we know no more of this Valley of Jiphtah-el, than that it was in the Tribe of Asher in the Confines of this Tribe, ver. 27.

Ver. 15. *And Kattath, and Naballal, and Shimron, and Idalah, and Beth-lehem.]* It is not certain whether these Cities belonged to Zebulon, or are set down as Places upon which this Tribe bordered. Of the two first, I can give no Account; but we read of Shimron as a principal City, which had a King in it conquered by Joshua. See xii. 20. And Idalah is mentioned by St. Hierom (*de locis Hebraicis*) and called *Jadela*; as if it were compounded of *Jad* (which signifies a Place, Deut. xxv. 12.) and *Ela* (a Goddess) being the Place where Venus was worshipped, as Bochartus conjectures, Lib. 1. Canaan, Cap. 3. As for Beth-lehem, we are not to take it for the Place where our Saviour was born; which is called Bethlehem-Judab, to distinguish it from this, which was far from it.

Twelve Cities, with their Villages.] Here are more Cities than twelve; therefore some of them are mentioned only as the Boundaries of this

Country. There is no doubt but those mentioned ver. 13. were in this Tribe; and many think those five here mentioned in this, were so also. Jokneam likewise belonged to it; but which were the rest to make up the Number twelve, cannot be determined.

Ver. 16. *This is the Inheritance of the Children of Zebulon, according to their Families, these Cities, with their Villages.]* That is, these were the Bounds of it; but all the Cities belonging to it are not here set down: For we read of two, Kartab, and Dimnah (xxi. 34, 35.) which are not here named. And indeed twelve Cities do not seem sufficient for sixty thousand Men, (Numb. xxvi. 27.) therefore they were only the principal; and all, perhaps, that the Measurers of the Land had noted in their Book.

Ver. 17. *And the fourth Lot came out for Issachar, for the Children of Issachar, according to their Families.]* Thus far there is some Kind of Order observed in these Lots: Issachar being Brother to Zebulon by the same Mother.

Ver. 18. *And their Border was towards Jezreel.]* This was one of the Royal Seats of the Kings of Israel in After-times, 1 Kings xxi. 1. which Eusebius and St. Hierom place in the Tribe of Manasseh; but ought to be accounted belonging to this Tribe, as the next Place is agreed to be. There was another in the Tribe of Judab, xv. 56.

And Chesulloth.] Mentioned ver. 12. which both the forementioned Authors place in the Tribe of Issachar, under the Name of Achseloth.

And Shunem.] Where that noble Lady lived who entertained Elisha at her House, 2 Kings iv. 8, 12. And where Abisag, the Wife of David, in his old Age, was born, 1 Kings i. 3.

Ver. 19. *Hapharaim, and Skibon, and Anabarrath.]* He doth not describe the Borders on all Sides of this Tribe; but only sets down some principal Cities; for it lying between Manasseh and Zebulon, the Situation of it was sufficiently known. And they do but guess, who say these six Cities named in the foregoing Verse and in this, were in the Southern Border.

Ver. 20. *And Rabbith, and Kishion, and Abez.]* These three Cities, and the two next that follow (ver. 21.) they will have to constitute the Western Border.

Ver. 21. *And Remeth and Engannim.]* Here, as I said, they imagine the Western Border ended.

En-baddab, and Leth-Pazzex.] These two, and the three next, ver. 22. they will have to be the Northern Border.

Ver. 22. *And the Coast reacheth to Tabor.]* That is, this Northern Border; for Mount Tabor was in the North; and this City was hard by it, and received its Name from the Mount, or gave its Name to it.

And Shabazimab, and Beth-shemesb.] Here ended the Northern Border. There was another Beth-shemesb in the Tribe of Naphtali, ver. 38. and another in the Tribe of Judab, xxi. 16.

And the Out-goings of their Border were at Jordan.] This makes it probable, the former Account of its other Borders is not true; because it leaves no City for the Eastern Border near *Jordan*; nor any for the Middle of the Country.

Sixteen Cities, with their Villages.] This shews that *Tabor* was a City; otherwise there would be but *fifteen*.

Ver. 23. This is the Inheritance of the Tribe of the Children of Issachar, according to their Families, the Cities and Village.] These were their principal Cities; but it is likely there were others: For we read of two not here mentioned, *xxi. 28* and *29. Deborah* and *Jarmuth*; yet there are those who think *Jarmuth* is but another Name for *Remeth*, here mentioned, *ver. 2.* which to me doth not seem probable,

Ver. 24. And the fifth Lot came out for the Tribe of the Children of Asher, according to their Families.] No Reason can be given for this Order; unless it be, that God was pleased to place this Tribe, being descended from the Handmaid of *Leah*, not far from *Zebulon*, one of *Leah's* Sons. As for *Gad*, the elder Brother of *Asher*, he was provided for before, on the other Side of *Jordan*.

Ver. 24. And their Border was Helkath, and Hali, and Beten, and Achshaph.] We know no more of the three first of these Cities, than their Names. But the last of them was very considerable; Mention being made of the King of *Achshaph*, *xi. 1. xii. 20.* The first of them also we find was a *Levitical* City, *xxi. 31.* called *Hukock*, in *1 Chron. vi. 75.* It appears likewise, by the Mention of *Carmel* in the next Verse, unto which this Border reached, that these Cities lay in the West near the *Mediterranean* Sea.

Ver. 26. And Alammalech, and Amad, and Misrael, and reacheth to Carmel Westward.] Or, by the Sea, not far from *Ptolemais*; to distinguish it from the other *Carmel*, in the Tribe of *Judab*, near *Hebron*. See *xv. 55.* Here the great Prophet *Elijah* sometimes dwelt, and confuted the *Baalites* by a stupendous Miracle. But we are as ignorant of the three Cities mentioned in this Verse, as we are of the other in the foregoing.

And to Shihor-Libnath.] Whether this was a City (some fancy *Ptolemais*) or a Promontory, or a muddy River, (for there are those different Opinions about it) I cannot determine.

Ver. 27. And turneth toward the Sun-rising.] It turned from the Sea toward the East; and so Northward, bending toward the West again. For there are no Borders or Sides of this Tribe described: But from the South Part of the Sea it turned Eastward, and then Northward, in the Form of a Bow, toward the North Part of the same Sea, where *Zidon* was, *ver. 28.*

To Beth-dagon.] There was a Place of this Name mentioned before in the Tribe of *Judab*, *xv. 41.* where it is thought there was a famous Temple of *Dagon*, the God of the *Philistines*.

And reacheth to Zebulon, and to the Valley Jiphtab-el.] And so touched upon the North

Border of the Tribe of *Zebulon*; in which the Valley of *Jiphtab-el* lay. See *ver. 14.*

Toward the North Side of Beth-emek, and Neiel.] Where these were, is not known. Only *Eusebius* and *St. Hierom* say, *Beth-emek* lay in a Valley, or low Place in this Tribe; as the Word seems to import.

And goeth out to Cabul on the Left-Hand.] On the North Side (called the *Left-Hand*) of this City, which lay in the Tribe of *Asher*, this Border ended. Some have been so frivolous as from hence to argue, that this Book was written long after *Joshua's* Time; because the Land of *Cabul* (*1 Kings ix. 13.*) was not known till the Days of *Solomon*, when *Hiram* gave this Name to the Land, which *Solomon* presented him withal. As if there were no Difference between the Land, and the City of *Cabul*: When one of them was a little Region, containing twenty Towns, and the other a small Place in the Confines of *Ptolemais*; both of them in the Tribe of *Asher*. They are plainly distinguished by *Josephus*, who calls one of them *γενεα καβαλών*, the Land of *Cabul*; and the other *κώμην*, the Village of *Cabul* as *Huetius* hath observed, *Propos. 4. Demonstr. Evang. P. 186.*

Ver. 28. And Hebron.] Called *Elbon* by the *LXX*, and by the Vulgar *Abran*; to distinguish it, I suppose, from that *Hebron* in the Land of *Judab*.

And Rehob.] There were two Cities of this Name in this Tribe. See *ver. 30.* One of them was a *Levitical* City, *xxi. 31.* and the *Canaanites* kept Possession either of that, or the other, *Judg. 1. 31.*

And Hammon.] There was a *Levitical* City of this Name in the Tribe of *Naphtali*, *1 Chr. vi. 76.* called *Hammothdor* in *xxi. 32.* of this Book.

And Kana.] There were two Cities of this Name; one in the Upper *Galilee*, which was *Kana the Greater*; and the other in the Lower *Galilee*, called *Kana the Less*. He speaks here of the Greater, which was near to *Sidon*. The Lesser was that wherein our Saviour turned Water into Wine, and of which *Nathanael* and the *Syrophenician* Woman were.

Even unto Great Sidon.] See before concerning this City, *xi. 8.*

Ver. 29. And then the Coast turneth to Ramah.] Another City on the Northern Part of the *Mediterranean* Sea.

And to the strong City Tyre.] This Translation is questionable: For we never read one Word of the City *Tyre* (unless it be here) until the Days of *David*; tho' we often read of *Sidon* in the Books of *Moses*; even in the Prophecy of *Jacob*. And, as *Bochartus* observes, *Homer* himself, who speaks frequently of *Sidon* and the *Sidonians*, never names *Tyre*, *Lib. 4. Phaleg. Cap. 85.* Therefore, it is highly probable, some other Place is meant by *Tzor* (as our Margin notes the Word is in the *Hebrew*) which was a fenced City, as we render the Word here translated *Strong*, *ver. 35.* And there were several Cities, perhaps, called by this Name of *Tzor* or *Tyre*, besides that famous one in future Times; particularly *Palætyrus*; as much

much as to say *old Tyre*. And it is no improbable Conjecture of *Campegius Vitringa*, that into these two Places, *Sidon* and *Tzor*, many of the People of *Canaan* fled, to secure themselves when *Joshua* invaded them: For *Tzor*, signifies not only a *Rock*, but any strong fortified Place; from whence it is possible, the *Latin Word Turris*, and then our *English, Tower*, is derived. Certain it is, that these two were famous Cities, *ἑνδοξικοὶ λαμπροί*, as *Strabo* calls them, *Lib. 16.* where he saith, they were so anciently, and not only in his Time; insomuch, that it was uncertain which was the Metropolis of the *Phœnicians*. But it is certain he speaks of the *New Tyre*, which was built in an Island; but the *Old* one was one of the Continent. See his *Observationes Sacrae*, *Lib. 1. Cap. 1.*

And the Coast turneth to Hofab.] Declined a little towards a City of this Name.

And the out-goings of it are at the Sea, from the Coast of Achzib.] It ended at the Country which belonged to *Achzib*; for so *Hebel* (which we here translate *Coast*) signifies. In proper speaking, it signifies a *Cord*, whereby Ground was measured; and thence was used to signify the Portion of Ground itself, which was measured by that Cord, or Line. Thus we read of *Hebel Argob*, the Region of *Argob*, *Deut. iii. 13.* and *Hebel Hajam*, the Region of the Sea, *Zeph. ii. 5.* *Achzib*, according to *St. Hierom*, is that Place, which by *Pliny* and others, was called in After-times *Ecdippa*.

Ver. 30. Ummah also, and Aphek, and Rehob.] It is probable, these were three Cities in the Heart of the Country of *Asher*.

Twenty-two Cities, with their Villages.] There are more than this Number here mentioned, tho' we do not reckon *Carmel*, nor *Jiphtab-el*; one of which was a Mountain, the other a Valley. Therefore some of them were only the Boundaries of this Tribe, but did not belong to their possession.

Ver. 31. This is the Inheritance of the Tribe of the Children of Asher, according to their Families, these Cities, with their Villages.] That is, these were the most eminent Cities; tho' it be probable there were some other. For we read of one called *Abdon*, *xxi. 30.* not here mentioned.

Ver. 32. And the sixth Lot came out for the Children of Naphtali, even for the Children of Naphtali, according to their Families.] Here the younger Son of *Bilhah*, the Handmaid of *Rachel*, is preferred before the Elder, who was *Dan*, (*Gen. xxx. 6, 8.*) as *Zebulon* was before *Issachar*. Such was the Method of divine Providence in that Nation; to shew them that they ought not to value themselves too highly, as they were prone to do, upon their external Privileges.

Ver. 33. And their Coast was from Heleph, from Allon to Zaanannim, and Adam, Nekeb, and Jabneel, unto Lakum.] He doth not say what Coast this was; but by what follows, it appears to be the Northern Border, where these Cities were situated, near *Lebanon* and *Sidon*, and the rest of the Northern Part of *Asher's* Country: For *Naphtali* comprehended the Upper *Galilee*.

And the Out-goings thereof were at Jordan.] This Border ended at this River; and at the very Fountain of it, which was at the Foot of *Libanus*.

Ver. 34. And then the Coast turneth Westward to Aznoth-tabor, and goeth out from thence to Hukkok.] The Southern Border began at the former of these Cities; and ended at the latter.

And reacheth to Zebulon on the South Side.] Touched on the Confines of the Tribe of *Zebulon*: so that the North Side of *Zebulon* was the South Side of *Naphtali*.

And reacheth to Asher on the West Side.] This is a short Account of their Western Border, which went as far as to the Borders of the Tribe of *Asher*.

And to Judah upon Jordan toward the Sun-rising.] It was not near *Judah*, there being several Tribes between them. Therefore, the Meaning is, this Tribe had Communication with that of *Judah* by the River *Jordan*. So the Word *upon* in our Translation must be interpreted, (tho' there be no Proposition at all in the *Hebrew* before *Jordan*) which River afforded them Convenience of carrying Merchandizes to *Judah*, or bringing them from thence. And thus some think the Prophecy of *Moses* was fulfilled, *Deut. xxxiii. 23. Possess thou the West and the South.* Which doth not signify that they had any Land in the South; but that they trafficked with it, by the Means of *Jordan*.

Ver. 35. And the fenced Cities are Ziddim, Zer, and Hammath, Rakkath, and Cinnereth.] These were Northern Cities, it appears by that mentioned in the Midst, *Hammath*; or *Hammath*, which was the utmost Bounds of the Land of *Israel* Northward. See *Numb. xiii. 21. xxxiv. 8. 1 Kings viii. 65.* It seems to have had its Name from the youngest Son of *Canaan*, who, it is likely, built it, as his eldest Son did *Sidon*, *Gen. x. 18.* It continued a famous City a long time; for in the Days of *David*, we read how the King of it cunningly made his Peace with him, by a great Present, *2 Sam. viii. 9, &c.*

Rakkath.] Which follows that, is, in the Opinion of some of the *Jews*, the same with *Tiberias*. So the Author of the Book *de Cippis Hebraicis*, set forth by *Hottinger*. Whence the *Talmudists*, as he observes, say, *Rakath* is *Zipporia*; which was called *Rakath*, because it was seated upon the Bank of a River. It was also called *Mafia*, and at last *Tiberias*; tho' other *Jewish* Authors make *Rakkath* different from that City.

Cinnereth.] A Place upon this Sea of *Tiberias*; in which there were fine Gardens, and a kind of Paradise. Whence it was called *Geneser*; as much as to say, *the Gardens of Princes* (*Gannoth-Sarim*.) And it had the Name of *Cinnereth*, from its Sweetness and Pleasures, as the *Jews* say (*Cod. Megill.*) *Kinnereth*, is *Ginset* *And why is it called Cinnereth? because its Fruits are as sweet to the Taste, as the Sound of an Harp is to the Ear.* See *Hottinger* in his Annot. on the forenamed Book, *P. 36.*

As for the two first Cities, *Ziddim* and *Zor*, I can say nothing of them.

Ver. 36. *And Adamah, and Ramah, and Hazor.*] We may guess where these Cities were, by the last of them, *Hazor*, to which they were Neighbours. See concerning it, xi. 1.

Ver. 37. *And Kedesh, and Edrei, and Enhazor.*] The first of these was a *Levitical City*, xxi. 32. in which that famous Captain *Barak* was born, *Judg.* iv. 6. where it is called *Kedib-Naphtali*, to distinguish it from those of that Name in other Tribes. Of the other two Cities we know nothing.

Ver. 38. *And Iron, and Migdal-el, and Horem, and Beth-anath and Beth-sheMesh.*] Every one knows there was another *Beth-sheMesh* in the Tribe of *Judah*; and that this City and *Beth-anath*, the Children of *Naphtali* could not conquer, *Judg.* i. 33. But we know no more of them, nor of the rest; save only that *Eusebius* says there was a large Village, called *Magdal-el*, between *Dora* and *Ptolomais*.

Nineteen Cities, with their Villages.] Six of which were fenced Cities, certainly belonging to this Tribe, and there are as many more mentioned, as make up twenty-three. Some of which therefore must be accounted as bordering Cities; or only large Villages, and not properly Cities.

Ver. 39. *This is the Inheritance of the Tribe of the Children of Naphtali, according to their Families, the Cities, and their Villages.*] This must be understood (as in the Account of the fore-mentioned Tribes) of the principal Cities; for there were more besides these, as appears from xxi. 32. Where *Hammoth-der*, and *Kartan*, are numbred among the *Levitical Cities* in this Tribe, which are not mentioned here.

Ver. 40. *And the seventh Lot came out for the Tribe of the Children of Dan, according to their Families.*] They were the only remaining Tribe, that was to be provided for.

Ver. 41. *And the Coast of their Inheritance was Zorah, and Eshtaol, and Ir-sheMesh.*] He doth not describe their Lot by its Borders; but mentions the Cities that were in it. Some of which at first were given to *Judah*; out of whose Share, it being too large, some Cities were taken for the *Danites*, as others were for the *Simeonites*. And it is certain the two first of these fell to *Judah*, in the first Division of the Land, xv. 33. Both very eminent Places, for the Birth and Burial, and mighty Motions of *Sampson*: For at *Zorah* he was born, *Judg.* xiii. 2. between *Zorah* and *Eshtaol* he was buried, *Judg.* xvi. ult. and here the Spirit of God began to move him at certain Times, xiii. 25. It is probable also, that *Ir-sheMesh* was in the Tribe of *Judah* at the first; it being of the same Signification with *Beth-sheMesh*: For one signifies the *City of the Sun*; the other, the *House*, or *Place of the Sun*.

Ver. 42. *And Shaalabbin.*] Which the *Amorites* kept in their Possession, *Judg.* i. 35. where; by a small Change of Letters, it is called *Shaalbin*; and in some Copies of the LXX translated ἐν ᾧ αἱ ἀλώπεκες, and in others ἐν Θέλαβιν. And in our present LXX both these are retained. For a Fox in the *Arabian Language* is called *Thalab*, and in the *Phœnician* (which is

half *Arabick*) *Saalab*; as *Bockartus* observes in his *Hierozycon*, P. 1. Lib. 3. Cap. 13. and in his *Canaan*, Lib. 1. Cap. 34. P. 684.

And Ajalon.] Another City which the *Amorites* kept from them, as we find in the same Place, *Judg.* i. 35. And was one of the *Levitical Cities*, xxi. 23. and that famous Place mentioned x. 13.

And Jethlab.] We know no more of it, than that it was a City in this Tribe.

Ver. 43. *And Elon, and Thimnathab, and Ekron.*] It is certain, that the last of these three Cities was at first given to *Judah*, xv. 45. But *Thimnathab* was not the same with *Timnath* in the same Tribe, (xv. 10. 57.) but quite different from it; as *Gibeath*, I observed in the foregoing Chapter, was from *Geba*. For *Sampson* went down to this City *Timnath*, *Judg.* xiv. 5. which shews it was in a Valley; whereas *Judah* went up to *Timnath* to shear his Sheep, (*Gen.* xxxviii. 11, 13.) which shews it was upon an Hill. Concerning *Elon*, I can say nothing; unless it be the same with *Holon*, in the Tribe of *Judah*, xv. 51.

Ver. 44. *And Eltekeb, and Gibbethon, and Baalab.*] Some think that the first of these is the same with that City, in the Tribe of *Judah*, called *Eltekon*, xv. 59. and the last the same with that called there *Baalab*, ver. 39. As for *Gibbethon*, the *Danites* seem not to have got Possession of it, or to have lost it again; for it was in the Hands of the *Philistines* after the Days of *David*, 1 *Kings* xv. 27. xvi. 15. and yet appointed one of the *Levitical Cities*, *Josh.* xvi. 21, 23.

Ver. 45. *And Jebud, and Bene-berak, and Gath-rimmon.*] Where *Jebud* was, I find not; but Βαρκαν is mentioned by *Eusebius* as a Village near *Azotus* (or *Ashdod*) and *St. Hierom* saith in his Time was called *Bernea*. Which may incline us to his Opinion, that *Gith-rimmon* was no other than the City of *Gath* so often mentioned in Scripture as one of the principal Cities of the *Philistines*. It is reckoned among the *Levitical Cities*, xxi. 24. as *Gibbethon* was (ver. 44.) tho' in the Hands of the *Philistines*.

Ver. 46. *And Mejarkon, and Rakkon.*] It is not certain where these Places were; but very likely near to the Place next mentioned.

With the Border before Japho.] This Place was afterward called *Joppa*, being the principal Port-Town in all *Judaea* (mentioned by *Pompon. Mela*, *Strabo*, and *Pliny*) and continues so to this Day; retaining the Name of *Japha*, which in *Hebrew* signifies *fair*, or *beautiful*. It is not certain that it was a Part of the Tribe of *Dan*, tho' *Eusebius* calls it a Sea-Town of the Lot of *Dan*; for these Words may signify no more, but that their Portion comprehended the Border which lay before this Place.

Ver. 47. *And the Coast of the Children of Dan went out too little for them.*] These Words, *too little*, are not in the *Hebrew*; where there is nothing answering to them. But the Words run thus, *the Coast of the Children of Dan went out from them*; that is, they were dispossessed of it in some Parts by their powerful Neighbours, the *Amorites*; who forced them into the Mountains, and would not let them dwell in the Valley

Judg. i. 34. This put them to such Straits, that they were constrained to enlarge their Border some other Way ; which they did by the Means following. I shall only further note, that this is no strange Phrase ; for in the Year of *Jubilee* Lands are said to go out, when they returned to their first Owners, from the present Possessors, *Levit. xxv. 28, 30, 31, 33.*

Therefore the Children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem.] A City not far from Jordan, called *Laisb* in the Book of Judges, before it was taken by the Danites. In After-times, when it fell into the Hands of the Romans, it was called *Paneas* ; and made the Metropolis of *Iturea* and *Trachonitis*. And from Philip also Son of Herod the Great, who very much enlarged and adorned it, it was called *Cæsarea Philippi*, in Honour of *Tiberius Cæsar*.

And took it, and smote it with the Edge of the Sword, and possessed it, and dwelt therein.] Were not disturbed in their Possession.

And called Leshem-Dan, after the Name of Dan their Father.] Thus Conquerors were wont to change the Names of Places, which they subdued. This was done after Joshua's Death ; and is related more largely in the Book of Judges, Chap. xviii. where there is an Account of the whole Expedition. From whence some argue this Book was not written by Joshua ; whereas no more can be inferred from it than this, that in After-times, Ezra, or some other, thought good to put in this Verse here, to compleat the Account of the Danites Possessions. But any one may see, as Huetius observes, that if this Verse were taken away, all that is said of this Tribe coheres perfectly ; and there is no Breach at all in the Context of the foregoing with the following Verse after this. Which is an Argument, that this short Account of their taking Leshem, were not the Words of the Writer of this Book, but inserted afterward by some other Person. For if they were taken away, this Relation of the Danites Lot would be more like the Account of the Lot of all the rest

Ver. 48. This is the Inheritance of the Tribe of the Children of Dan according to their Families, these Cities, with their Villages.] The Number of them is not set down, as in the foregoing Tribes ; of which it is to no Purpose to enquire the Reason.

Ver. 49. When they had made an End of dividing the Land for Inheritance, by their Coasts.] That is, after every Tribe had their Portion assigned to them.

The Children of Israel gave an Inheritance to Joshua the Son of Nun, among them.] We cannot but observe the wonderful Modesty of this great Man, who received his Portion last of all ; and then, not by Lot, but by their Gift ; who were already possessed of the whole Land.

Ver. 50. According to the Word of the LORD, they gave him the City which he asked.] God indeed had ordered that he should have a Portion, and that he should chuse it ; but he was content to stay for it till every body else was served. We do not expressly read of this Command ; but many Things were said and done, which

are not recorded. And he being as faithful and upright as Caleb (and besides, chosen to be the Captain of God's People) we cannot but think, that when God ordered what Caleb should have, he gave the same Direction about Joshua. And so much is implied in those Words of Caleb himself, when he demanded his Portion of Joshua, *xiv. 6. Thou knowest the thing the LORD said unto Moses the Man of GOD concerning me and thee in Kadesh-barnea.*

Even in Timnath-Serah in Mount Ephraim.] He did not chuse the best Place in all the Country, but a convenient Place in his own Tribe ; which was seated on the North Side of a Hill called *Gaash* ; as we read in the latter End of this Book.

And he built the City, and dwelt therein.] Repaired it, I suppose (for in all likelihood there was a City there before) and made a convenient Habitation for his Family and Kindred. But we read nothing of them ; for as he did not affect to make himself King of Canaan, so he contented himself with a little, and made no large Provision for his Posterity. We have no Mention made of his Sons or Daughters ; but (as Conrad. Pellicanus speaks) all the Israelites were his Children.

Ver. 51. These are the Inheritances, which Eleazar the Priest, and Joshua the Son of Nun, and the Heads of the Fathers of the Tribes of the Children of Israel, divided for an Inheritance by Lot, in Shiloh, before the LORD, at the Door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation.] It is usual, after so long an Account, to recapitulate in brief what they had done, and by what Authority ; which he doth in this Verse.

So they made an end of dividing the Country.] Every Tribe had the Place of their Settlement appointed to their Satisfaction ; so that there was no further Division made of the Land.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. AND the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying.] From the Tabernacle, at the Door of which he and Eleazar, and the Princes had been making a Division of the Land ; as the last Verse of the foregoing Chapter tells us.

Ver. 2. Speak unto the Children of Israel, saying, Appoint out for you Cities of Refuge.] This was the proper Time for it ; when they were all met together to receive their several Portions of Land ; after an exact Survey of the Country.

Whereof I spake to you by my Servant Moses.] In *Numb. xxxv. 9, 10, 11, &c.* where he treats of them at large ; and repeats it again, *Deut. xix. 1, 2, &c.*

Ver. 3. That the Slayer that killeth any Person unawares, and unwittingly, may flee thither.] Such Places every Body knows, there were among the Heathen ; but commonly they were their Temples, and their Altars ; as many have observed. Particularly *Job. Gentius* lately, in his Book *de Victimis Humanis*, Pars 2. Cap. 21. P. 483, &c. But there were also some Cities, that had this Privilege, as *Dilberrus* (who thinks

thinks herein the *Gentiles* imitated the *Jews*) observes out of *Tacitus*, L. 3. *Annal.* where he saith the principal Cities of *Greece* contended before *Tiberius* about this Matter, *de Jure Asylorum.* See *Dissert. de Cacozelia Gentilium*, Cap. 3.

And they shall be your Refuge from the Avenger of Blood.] Protect such Persons from him who studied to avenge the Blood of the Slain. Concerning whom, see *Numb. xxxv. 12.*

Ver. 4. *And when he that doth flee unto one of those Cities, shall stand at the Entrance of the Gate of the City.]* Desiring to be admitted and protected there.

And shall declare his Cause in the Ears of the Elders of that City.] That is, the Judges, who sat in the Gate before-mentioned, *Deut. xvi. 18.*

They shall take him into the City unto them.] Being satisfied he was such a Person as he pretended.

And gave him a Place that he may dwell among them.] Assign a convenient Habitation for him; these Cities being appointed by *GOD* for that Purpose, and given unto those who inhabited them, on this Condition, that they should entertain such Persons when they fled to them.

Ver. 5. *And if the Avenger of Blood pursue after him.]* Desiring he might be delivered up into his Hand,

Then they shall not deliver the Slayer up into his Hands.] But defend him from his Assaults.

Because he smote his Neighbours unwittingly, and hated him not before-time.] It was a casual Slaughter, without any Design of doing him Hurt, as far as appeared to them. If the Avenger pursued the Slayer so closely, that they had not Time to examine the Matter at the Gate of the City, they were not to let him stand there; but take him in (and afterward hear his Cause, and judge it) lest the Avenger should kill him before he was admitted into their City.

Ver. 6. *And he shall dwell in that City, until he stand before the Congregation for Judgment.]* The Avenger might bring him before another Tribunal, to be tried whether he killed the Man by Chance or not. See *Numb. xxxv. 24, 25.*

And until the Death of the High Priest, that shall be in those Days.] If that Court found him not guilty of wilful Murder, he was restored to the City of Refuge; but confined to live there till the Death of the High-Priest. See in the same Place.

Then shall the Slayer return, and come unto his own City, and his own House, &c.] See *Numb. xxxv. 28.*

Ver. 7. *And they appointed Kedesh in Galilee, in Mount Naphtali; and Shechem in Mount Ephraim, and Kirjath-arba (which is Hebron) in the Mountain of Judab.]* It is commonly observed, that as these three Cities were seated on high and eminent Places, that they might be seen afar off; so they were at such a Distance from each other, that all the Country might more easily have the Benefit of one or other of them. For *Kedesh* was in the North; and *Hebron* in the South; and *Shechem* between both.

Thus they fulfilled the Command of *GOD*, *Deut. xix. 8.*

Ver. 8. *And on the other side Jordan by Jericho Eastward.]* On [the East of *Jericho*, in the Land of the two Tribes and half; which was almost as long as the Land of *Canaan*, tho' not so broad.

They assigned Bezer in the Wilderness, upon the Plain, out of the Tribe of Reuben; and Ramoth Gilead out of the Tribe of Gad; and Golan in Bashan out of the Tribe of Manasseh.] These Cities were assigned by *Moses* before he died, *Deut. iv. 43.* but had not the Privilege till now. And it is observable, that if *Bezer* stood in a flat Country, the other two, *Ramoth* and *Golan*, were in the high.

Ver. 9. *These were the Cities that were appointed for all the Children of Israel, and for the Stranger that sojourneth among them.]* For the Safety of all Sorts of Persons, as is manifest from *Numb. xxxv. 15.*

That whosoever killeth any Person at unawares, might flee thither, and not die by the Hand of the Avenger of Blood, until he stood before the Congregation.] It is observable, that all these Cities belonged to the *Levites*; who, by their Authority, might defend the Man from unjust Usage; and, by their Wisdom, direct the Elders to judge aright concerning his Cause; and also give him good Instructions while he lived among them, untill the Death of the High Priest.

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. **T**HEN came near.] After the Cities of Refuge were settled.

The Heads of the Fathers of the Levites.] So the Princes of the several Tribes (who divided the Land together with *Joshua* and *Eleazar*) are called, *xiv. 1.* and in the Conclusion of this Verse. And therefore, the chief Persons descended from *Koathath*, *Gershon*, and *Merari*, (who were the Fathers of the *Levites*) are here meant by the *Heads of the Fathers* of that Tribe.

Unto Eleazar, and unto Joshua, and unto the Heads of the Fathers of the Tribes of the Children of Israel.] Appointed by *GOD* to see the Land divided, called the *Princes* of the Tribes, *Numb. xxxiv. 18.*

Ver. 2. *And they spake unto them at Shiloh in the Land of Canaan, saying, The LORD commanded by the Hand of Moses, to give us Cities to dwell in, with the Suburbs thereof, for our Cattle.]* This Command is register'd in *Numb. xxxv. 2, &c.* and is set down before the Mention of Cities of Refuge (which are commanded in the following Part of the Chapter) tho', it seems, that Command was executed before this.

Ver. 3. *And the Children of Israel gave unto the Levites out of their Inheritance, at the Commandment of the LORD, these Cities, and their Suburbs.]* Not only *Joshua*, *Eleazar*, and the *Princes*, but all the People of *Israel* acknowledged this Obligation, which *GOD* had laid upon them; and

and accordingly, these Words import, that the People separated so many Cities as he commanded by *Moses* (which were to be forty and eight, *Numb. xxxv. 7.*) for the Habitation of the *Levites*.] Which Cities are here named, and distributed among them in this Chapter.

Ver. 4. *And the Lot came out for the Family of the Kohathites.*] After the Cities were set out, which should belong to them; then they were divided by Lot among the several Families of the *Levites*; as the whole Land was among the Tribes. And the first Lot came out for the noblest Family in the Tribe of *Levi*; for *Moses* and *Aaron* were descended from *Kohath*.

And the Children of Aaron the Priest, which was of the Levites.] The Family of *Aaron* being Priests, were the principal among the *Levites*; and therefore, were first and very honourably provided for.

Had by Lot out of the Tribe of Judah, and out of the Tribe of Simeon, and out of the Tribe of Benjamin, thirteen Cities.] It was by a special Providence, that the Share which fell to the Priests, was in those Tribes that were nearest to the City; which God intended should be the fixed Place of his Worship and Service in future Times; that the Priests might be ready to give their Attendance there, without much Trouble.

Ver. 5. *And the rest of the Children of Kohath.*] All his Descendants were not Priests, but *Aaron* and his Family alone; the rest were bare *Levites*.

Had by Lot out of the Family of the Tribe of Ephraim, and out of the Tribe of Dan, and out of the half Tribe of Manasseh, ten Cities.] These three Tribes were nearest to the three fore-mentioned so that the *Kohathites* were not far separated one from another.

Ver. 6. *And the Children of Gershon had by Lot out of the Families of the Tribe of Issachar, and out of the Tribe of Asher, and out of the Tribe of Naphtali, and out of the half Tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen Cities.*] Among the Sons of *Levi*, *Gershon* is mentioned as the eldest, (*Exod. vi. 16. Numb. iii. 17.*) but the Lot came up first to the Children of *Kohath*, the Priests being descended from him.

Ver. 7. *And the Children of Merari by their Families, had out of the Tribe of Reuben, and out of the Tribe of Gad, and out of the Tribe of Zebulun, twelve Cities.*] This is only a general Account of the Tribes in which their several Lots fell, and of the Number of Cities bestowed on their several Families.

Ver. 8. *And the Children of Israel gave by Lot unto the Levites these Cities, with their Suburbs.*] The Children of *Israel*, as I said before, gave them; and the Lot divided them.

As the LORD commanded by the Hand of Moses.] Who ordered both how many Cities they should have; and how large the Suburbs of them should be. See *Numb. xxxiv. 3, 4.*

Ver. 9. *And they gave out of the Tribe of the Children of Judah, and out of the Tribe of the Children of Simeon, the Cities, which are mentioned by Name.*] Here now follows a particular Account of the Names of those Cities, which were said before in general to have been given

out of these two Tribes. Which are put together; because the Lot of *Simeon* was taken out of the Lot of *Judah*.

Ver. 10. *Which the Children of Aaron, being of the Family of the Kohathites, &c.*] One of the Families of the *Kohathites*, and the eldest of them; for they descended from *Amram*, the eldest Son of *Kohath*. *Exod. vi. 18. Numb. iii. 19.*

For theirs was the first Lot.] They had the Honour to be first provided for, as was said before, ver. 4.

Ver. 11. *And they.*] That is, *Eleazar*, *Joshua*, and the Princes.

Gave them the City of Arba, the Father of Anak, which is Hebron, in the Hill-Country of Judah, &c.] See of this City, *xiv. 15. xv. 13.*

Ver. 12. *But the Fields of the City, and the Villages thereof, gave they to Caleb, the Son of Jephunneh, for his Possession.*] The Priests had only the City and Suburbs; which were their Possession, as much as the Fields and Villages were *Caleb's*; on whom they were bestowed before, *xiv. 13, &c.*

Ver. 13. *Thus they gave to the Children of Aaron the Priest, Hebron with her Suburbs, to be a City of Refuge for the Slayer.*] It was given them with this Condition, that they who slew a Man unawares, should be entertained here, and have a Place given them to live securely among them, *xx. 4.*

And Libnah, with her Suburbs.] This is to be understood to belong to them no otherwise than *Hebron* did; unto which they had no Right beyond the City and Suburbs: And therefore the Fields and the Villages of *Libnah* they had nothing to do withal; and the same is to be noted of all the following Cities of the Priests.

Ver. 14. *And Jittir, with her Suburbs; and Eshtemoa with her Suburbs.*] These are mentioned as belonging to *Judah*, *xv. 48, 50.*

Ver. 15. *And Holon with her Suburbs.*] Called *Helin*, *1 Chron. vi. 56.*

And Debir, with her Suburbs.] See *xv. 15.*

Ver. 16. *And Ain, with her Suburbs.*] A City in the Tribe of *Simeon*, *xix. 17.* but taken out of *Judah*, *xv. 32.*

And Juttah, with her Suburbs.] *xv. 55.*

And Beth-shemesh, with her Suburbs.] Unto which City the Providence of God directed the Kine, which drew the Cart wherein the *Philistines* put the Ark, when they sent it home, there being a great many Priests in it, to receive it with due Care and Reverence, *1 Sam. vi. 12, 13.*

Nine Cities out of these two Tribes.] For the Tribe of *Judah* was very large; and the Command of God was, that from them which had many Cities, they should give many, *Numb. xxxv. 8.*

Ver. 17. *And out of the Tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon, with her Suburbs, Goba, with her Suburbs.*] See *xviii. 24, 25.*

Ver. 18. *Anathoth, with her Suburbs.*] The City of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, who was a Priest, *Jer. i. 1.*

And Almon, with her Suburbs.] Called *Ale-meth*, in *1 Chron. vi. 60.* For there were greater

Alte-

Alterations than this made, by Length of Time, in the Names of Places.

Four Cities.] Which was a great many out of so small a Tribe; but the Soil of it, as I observed before, was very rich.

Ver. 19. *All the Cities of the Children of Aaron the Priest, were thirteen Cities, with their Suburbs.*] As was said, ver. 4.

Ver. 20. *And the Families of the Children of Kohath, the Levites which remained of the Children of Kohath.*] Who were mere Levites, and not Priests.

Even they had the Cities of their Lot out of the Tribe of Ephraim.] Part of them were planted there, and Part of them in two other Tribes, as it follows, ver. 23, &c.

Ver. 21. *For they gave them Shechem, with her Suburbs, in Mount Ephraim, to be a City of Refuge for the Slayer.*] See xx. 7.

And Gezer, with her Suburbs.] See xvi. 3, 10.

Ver. 22. *And Kibzaim, with her Suburbs.*] Which is called *Jokneam* in 1 Chron. vi. 68.

And Beth-horon, with her Suburbs.] We read of both the *Beth-horons* in the Description of this Tribe, the Upper and the Nether, xvi. 3, 5. the first of which seems to be here meant.

Ver. 23. *And out of the Tribe of Dan, Elkeleth, with her Suburbs; Gibethon, with her Suburbs.*

Ver. 24. *Aijalon, with her Suburbs; Gath-rimmon, with her Suburbs, four Cities.*] The four Cities mentioned in these two Verses, we find before in this Tribe, xix. 41, 44, 45.

Ver. 25. *And out of half of the Tribe of Manasseh.*] That half of it which was settled in *Canaan*.

Tanach, with her Suburbs.] xvii. 11.

And Gath-rimmon, with her Suburbs.] In 1 Chron. vi. 70. these two Cities are called *Aner*, and *Bileam*; so much were Names changed in a long Tract of Time. Or, they being dispossessed of the two Cities here mentioned, by the Invasions of their Enemies, (who perhaps demolished them) these two others were given in lieu of them.

Two Cities.] Which was a just Proportion to the other whole Tribes; who gave four.

Ver. 26. *All the Cities were ten, with their Suburbs, for the Families of the Children of Kohath that remained.*] Who were not of the Children of Aaron, the Priests, ver. 5.

Ver. 27. *And unto the Children of Gershon, of the Family of the Levites, out of the other half Tribe of Manasseh.*] Which had their Inheritance on the other side of *Jordan*.

Golan in Bashan, with her Suburbs, to be a City of Refuge for the Slayer.] xx. 8. From whence the neighbouring Country was called *Gaulonitis*.

And Beeshterah, with her Suburbs.] Called *Ashtaroth* in 1 Chron. vi. 71. by a very light Change; only leaving out the first Letter.

Two Cities.] The same Number that was given out of the other half of this Tribe, ver. 25.

Ver. 28. *Out of the Tribe of Issachar, Kishon, with her Suburbs.*] xix. 20. Called *Kedesb*, 1 Chron. vi. 72.

And Dabareh, with her Suburbs.] Not mentioned before in this Book, but in 1 Chron. vi. 72.

Ver. 29. *And Jarmuth.*] Called *Ramoth*, 1 Chron. vi. 73.

And Engannim.] xx. 21. Called, *Anem*, 1 Chron. vi. 73.

Ver. 30. *And out of the Tribe of Asher, Mishal, with her Suburbs.*] Called *Misbael*, xix. 26. and *Masbal*, 1 Chron. vi. 75.

And Abdon.] Mentioned in that Place in the *Chronicles*; but not in the nineteenth Chapter of this Book. See ver. 31. of that Chapter.

Ver. 31. *Helkath, with her Suburbs.*] xix. 25. Called *Hukok*, 1 Chron. vi. 75.

And Rehob.] Mentioned there, and *Josh.* xix. 28.

Ver. 32. *And out of the Tribe of Naphtali, Kedesb in Galilee, to be a City of Refuge for the Slayer.*] xx. 7.

And Hammoth-dor, with her Suburbs.] Called simply *Hamath*, xix. 35. and *Hammoth*, 1 Chron. vi. 76.

And Kartan, with her Suburbs.] Called *Kir-jathaim* in 1 Chron. vi. 76.

Three Cities.] This being a smaller Territory, it seems, than the rest of the Tribes fore-mentioned, who gave four.

Ver. 33. *All the Cities of the Gershonites, according to their Families, were thirteen Cities, with their Suburbs.*] As was said before, ver. 6.

Ver. 34. *And unto the Families of the Children of Merari, the rest of the Levites.*] The remaining Families of the Levites; for there were three Heads of them; *Gershon*, *Kohath*, and *Merari*.

Out of the Tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam, with her Suburbs, and Kartab, with her Suburbs.] Of the former, see xix. 11. and of the latter, ver. 16.

Ver. 35. *Dimnah, with her Suburbs; Mahair, with her Suburbs.*] See xix. 15, 16.

Four Cities.] There are but two mentioned, 1 Chron. vi. 77. with quite different Names; the other two, it seems, being lost before that Time.

Ver. 36. *And out of the Tribe of Reuben, Bezer, with her Suburbs.*] Which was one of the Cities of Refuge, xx. 8. tho' not here mentioned, as the rest are in the foregoing Part of this Chapter; and in ver. 38.

And Kedemoth, with her Suburbs.] These, and the two Cities in the following Verse, *Kedemoth* and *Mephaath*, are mentioned as Cities in this Tribe, xiii. 18. And so they are in 1 Chron. vi. 78, 79. as *Levitical Cities*.

Ver. 37. *Kedemoth, with her Suburbs, &c.*] Some have urged against the Integrity of the *Hebrew Text*, that this and the foregoing Verse are not to be found in some ancient Copies of the Bible; and indeed, the *Masorites* acknowledge as much. But it is evident that they are found in Copies of very great Antiquity; and the Context shews, that they ought to be here; as Bishop *Walton* observes in his *Considerator Considered*, Chap. 6. Sect. 14. And *Hottinger* also (who answers this Cavil more largely) observes, that they are in a most accurate MS. of the Duke of *Roban's*, written 1495. See his *Thesaurus Philolog.* L. 1. Cap. 2. Quæst. 4. P. 181, &c. The *Masorites*,

Maforites, who take Notice of this Omission, acknowledge in the Margin of this Verse, that it was to be found in several Copies.

Ver. 38. *And out of the Tribe of Gad, Ramoth in Gilead, with her Suburbs, to be a City of Refuge for the Slayer.]* xx. 1.

And Mahanaim, with her Suburbs.] This City was made by Abner the Royal Seat for *Ishbo-sheth*, βασιλειον ἐπίσημα, as *Josephus* speaks, L. 7. Antiq. Cap. 1.

Ver. 39. *Heshbon with her Suburbs; Jazer, with her Suburbs; four Cities in all.]* These, with the foregoing, are mentioned 1 Chron. vi. 80, 81.

Ver. 40. *So all the Cities for the Children of Merari, &c. were by their Lot twelve Cities.]* As was said in general before, ver. 7.

Ver. 41. *All the Cities of the Levites within the Possession of the Children of Israel, were forty and eight Cities, with their Suburbs.]* So God ordered by *Moses*, Numb. xxxv. 7. And it is a Demonstration that *Moses* was divinely inspired, to make such an Appointment; before they knew whether, without straitning the other Tribes, they could afford so many Cities to the *Levites*. For when *Joshua* and *Caleb* went up to search the Land (with the rest, mentioned Numb. xiii.) they could have no Opportunity to take the Dimensions of the Country; where-by *Moses* might know there would be Room enough to allow the *Levites* so large a Proportion as this; but he was directed to it by a Divine Foreknowledge.

Ver. 42. *These Cities were every one of them, with their Suburbs round about them.]* Viz. Two thousand Cubits on every Side, round the City, as is ordered Numb. xxxv. 5. Which must be owned to be a great Proportion for this Tribe; which was the smallest of them all. But God would have an ample Provision made for his Ministers; and they had none of the Land belonging to these Cities, as was before observed, but only Room for themselves, and for their Cattle.

Thus were all these Cities.] Disposed and settled according to the Divine Commandment. Six of which were Cities of Refuge; and the other Forty-two had the same Privileges, if the Inhabitants pleased, and at the Cost of those that fled thither for Safety. See upon Numb. xxxv. 6.

Ver. 43. *And God gave unto Israel all the Land, which he swore to give unto their Fathers.]* He gave them a Right to the whole Country, (which was distributed among them, as he appointed, by a Lot which he ordered and directed) and he gave them the actual Possession and Enjoyment of the greatest Part of it; and he gave them Power to subdue the rest (if they continued obedient to him) as soon as it was convenient. Which was exactly according to his Promise and Oath made to them; for they not being numerous enough to people the whole Country, at their first coming into it, he never intended to expel all the old Inhabitants at once, but by degrees; as we read expressly, Exod. xxiii. 29, 30.

And they possessed it, and dwelt therein.] Went

every Man to his Lot, and peopled the Country, as far as at present they were able.

Ver. 44. *And the LORD gave them Rest round about, according to all that he swore unto their Fathers.]* None molested them in their Possessions; but they ploughed, and sowed, and reaped, &c. without any Disturbance.

And there stood not a Man of all their Enemies before them.] For whosoever had opposed them, were overthrown and destroyed by them; and, as it follows,

The LORD delivered all their Enemies into their Hand.] Which is not to be understood, as if all the People of *Canaan* were absolutely under their Power; but that, as long as *Joshua* lived, not a Man appeared to fight with them, but was delivered up unto them.

Ver. 45. *There failed not ought of any good Thing which the LORD had spoken unto the House of Israel; all came to pass.]* Which they themselves (he tells them afterward, xxiii. 14.) knew very well, and could not but confess. But it must be understood according to the Explanation of ver. 43. For the Time of fulfilling some Part of his Promise, was not come; and the Completing of what was begun, depended upon their Obedience to him. But (as *Conradus Pellicanus* here admonishes) *we are taught by this the Truth of the Divine Promises; and it ought to establish the Belief of the Faithful, that it do not fluctuate; tho' the Promises of God seem to us to be fulfilled very slowly.*

C H A P. XXII.

Ver. 1. *AND Joshua called the Reubenites, and Gadites, and the half Tribe of Manasseh.]* Who came as Auxiliaries to their Brethren when they passed over *Jordan*; as they had engaged to do, when they received their Inheritance on the other side of it, i. 12, 13, 14, &c.

Ver. 5. *And said unto them, Ye have kept all that Moses the Servant of the LORD commanded you: and have obeyed my Voice in all that I commanded you.]* Numb. xxxii. 20, &c. Deut. iii. 18, &c. In this and the following Verses, he commends them for their Obedience unto God and unto him; and for their Fidelity to their Promises; and their Constancy and Patience in their Piety to God, and Love to their Brethren.

Ver. 3. *Ye have not left your Brethren these many Days, unto this Day.* Seven Years (some think, as many more) they had continued in their Service; as long as the War lasted with the *Canaanites*; yea, till they had seen their Brethren settled in the Lots fallen to them.

But have kept the Charge of the Commandment of the LORD our God.] During which Time they never refused what was expected from them, for the Help of their Brethren. See xi. 18. xiv. 10. This was a great Proof of their patient Obedience, in staying so long from their Wives and Children.

Ver. 4. *And now the LORD your God hath given Rest unto your Brethren, as he promised them.]* Which he had done for them before, i. 13.

Now therefore return to your Tents.] So he calls their Houses, because this was the common Word used for a long Time in the Wilderness, to signify an Habitation.

And unto the Land of your Possession, which Moses the Servant of the LORD gave you on the other side Jordan.] It was but reasonable and just, that they should go and enjoy what God had given them; now their Brethren were in a quiet Possession of their Portion; and that their Fidelity in performing their Promise, should be rewarded with the like, in dismissing them, when they had done their Business. For they engaged to serve no longer, than till they had driven the Canaanites out of their Country, Numb. xxxii. 21.

Ver. 5. *But take diligent heed to do the Commandment of the Law, which Moses the Servant of the LORD charged you.]* That is, to observe all his Precepts, (as they had done this of aiding their Brethren) and for that End, preserve in Mind all that God had done for them. See Deut. iv. 9.

To love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his Ways, and to keep his Commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your Heart, and with all your Soul.] Especially to worship the LORD alone, with sincere Affection; which Moses inculcated above all Things, before he left them, Deut. vi. 5, 13, 14. x. 12. xi. 13, 22. xx. 9. xxx. 6, 20.

Ver. 6. *So Joshua blessed them, and sent them away.]* He not only praised and commended them; but dismissed them with a solemn Prayer to God for his Blessing upon them. And he seems first to have dismissed with his Blessing the Reubenites and Gadites; and then to have blessed the Manassites by themselves.

And they went unto their Tent.] In order to pack up their Goods, and make themselves ready for their Departure.

Ver. 7. *Now to the one half of the Tribe of Manasseh, Moses had given Possession in Bashan; but unto the other half thereof, gave Joshua among their Brethren on this side Jordan Westward.]* This is repeated to shew why he mentioned only half the Tribe of Manasseh, ver. 1. and to introduce what follows.

And when Joshua had sent them away also unto their Tents.] As he had done the Reubenites and Gadites.

Then he blessed them.] This seems to signify that he gave a peculiar Blessing to the Manassites; that is, rewarded their Services, by some Present which he made them: For so the Word Blessing (I observed before) sometimes signifies, 2 Kings v. 15. And he did this the rather, because the Manassites were near of Kin to the Children of Ephraim, (of which Tribe he himself was) and were now to be separated from the rest of their Brethren in Canaan.

Ver. 8. *And he spake unto them, saying.]* This Speech seems to be directed to the Reubenites and Gadites, as well as to the Manassites; tho' they had a peculiar Concern in it.

Return with much Riches unto your Tents, and with very much Cattle, and with Silver, and with Gold, &c.] As much as to say, Part with your Brethren contentedly and well pleased; laden with the Spoils which you have got in the Wars against the People of Canaan. For they had their Share in the Prey, as well as the other seven Tribes and half; and carried it away to their own Country.

Divide the Spoil of your Enemies with your Brethren.] He orders them, when they came home, to let those that staid on the other side Jordan, to defend their Wives, Children, and Cattle, to have a Share in the Spoil which they had gotten. For this was thought an equal thing by God himself in the War they had with the Midianites, before they came over Jordan; when twelve thousand went out to fight; who had one half of the Spoil; the other half being divided among all the Congregation, that staid at home, Numb. xxxi. 27. And it is very reasonable to think that now the same Proportion was observed; the forty thousand who went to help their Brethren in the War, having one half of the Spoil; and their Brethren who staid to guard their Possession, the other half: So that the Warriors had the far greater Share, as there was Reason; because they had hazarded their Lives in the Enterprize. But in David's Time, it was made a Law, that they who went to fight, and they that staid to guard the Stuff, should have an equal Share in the Prey, 1 Sam. xxx. 24, 25. See Gen. xiv. ult.

Ver. 9. *And the Children of Reuben, and the Children of Gad, and the half Tribe of Manasseh, returned and departed from the Children of Israel out of Shiloh, which is in the Land of Canaan, to go into the Country of Gilead, &c.]* This shews that he gave them all his Blessing in Shiloh, where the Sanctuary was; and sent them from thence, under the divine Protection, to their own Country: Which is here called the Country of Gilead; because that was an eminent Part of their Country, divided between the Children of Gad and Manasseh; and here comprehends all the rest of the Land, where the Reubenites lived.

Ver. 10. *And when they came to the Borders of Jordan.]* Or, they came (for the Word when is not in the Hebrew) unto the Banks of that River.

Which are in the Land of Canaan.] This seems to import that they built the Altar, mentioned in the End of the Verse, before they went over Jordan, in the Land of Canaan. Which is not at all likely; for it would not have answered their Intention; which was to shew, that Jordan did not make such a Separation between them and their Brethren, but that they were one People with those in Canaan; where the Altar of God was in Shiloh. Therefore I take this to be a short manner of Speech; signifying, that they came to the Borders of Jordan in the Land of Canaan; and passed over into their own Country on the other side of the River. And so the Hebrew Word *Geliloth* (which we translate *Borders*) seems to signify, a certain Place near Jordan, to which they came. The *Vulgar Latin* translates

translates it *Heaps*; the LXX. in the *Vatican* Copy, retains the Word *γαλαὰδ* (or *γαλιλὰδ*, as other Copies more truly have it) taking it for some noted Place, which was near to their Passage over *Jordan*.

The Children of Reuben, and the Children of Gad, and the half Tribe of Manasseh, built there an Altar by Jordan.] The Word *there* hath made it thought, that they built this Altar in *the Land of Canaan* before mention'd: But the Particle *Sham* relates to Time, as well as Place, and may be translated *then*, as well as *there*. Examples of which there are in *Judg.* v. 21. *Prov.* viii. 27. compared with *ver.* 30. *Ecclef.* iii. 17. and most plainly *Isa.* xlviii. 16. And thus it is to be here interpreted, that before they went any farther, they staid by *Jordan*, till they had built this Altar, on the Borders of their own Country: For so the next Verse teaches us to expound it, and will admit of no other Sense; where it is said, they had built an Altar *over against the Land of Canaan*.

A great Altar to see to.] Which made a great Show, being very high and conspicuous, that it might be seen afar off. For being built, not by a private Person, but by the whole Body of a great People, they thought they could not make it too stately and magnificent. And herein it differ'd so much from the Altar made by *Moses*, that they thought perhaps it would administer the less Occasion to their Brethren, to suspect it was intended for Sacrifice.

Ver. 11. And the Children of Israel.] That were in the Land of *Canaan*. This is an Instance of such a short Manner of Speech, as I take that in the foregoing Verse to be; which must be made out by some such Supplement as is there mention'd. For the *Reubenites*, *Gadites*, &c. were *the Children of Israel*, as well as those settled in the Land of *Canaan*.

Heard say.] This is an Argument the Altar was not built on their side of *Jordan*; for then they would have seen what they were doing, and hinder'd the Building; whereas they heard nothing of it till it was built.

Behold, the Children of Reuben, and the Children of Gad, and the half Tribe of Manasseh, have built an Altar.] By a common Consent.

Over-against the Land of Canaan, in the Borders of Jordan, at the Passage of the Children of Israel.] Either there where they now pass'd over *Jordan*, or where they all pass'd over when they enter'd *Canaan*, or at the usual Place where every body was wont to pass over, that they might take the more Notice of it. And here also were the *Geliloth* before mention'd, like those on the other side; which seem to have been great Banks cast up, to keep *Jordan* from overflowing too far.

Ver. 12. And when the Children of Israel heard of it, the whole Congregation of the Children of Israel.] Not all the People of the Land but their Elders, and Heads of their Tribes, who, in the foregoing Books, are often call'd by the Name of *Colledath* (*all the Congregation*.) See *Numb.* xxvii. 2. xxxii. 2. and Chap. xviii. of this Book, *ver.* 1.

Gathered themselves together at Shiloh.] It

seems they had been separated, being gone to settle in their several Cities.

To go to War against them.] To consult about it. For they imagin'd them to be Apostates from their Religion, which, as it required them to worship the LORD alone, and no other God, so at no other Place but that which he himself had chosen. Where he allow'd but one Altar, as there was but one God. See *Deut.* xii. 5, 6, 11, 13, 18, 26, 27. xiii. 12, &c. That Altar also, where he commanded Sacrifices to be offer'd, was to be but three Cubits high, (*Exod.* xxvii. 1.) so that they went not up to it by Steps, (*Exod.* xx. 26.) whereas this was an high Altar, like those among the Heathens, who lov'd to sacrifice on high Places, (*i. e.* Mountains) and also upon high and lofty Altars, which advanced their Sacrifices nearer Heaven. And this, perhaps, was one Thing that incensed the Congregation now assembled, and made them think their Brethren were laps'd to Idolatry; either intending to worship other Gods, or the God of *Israel* in an unlawful Place and Manner.

Ver. 13. And the Children of Israel sent unto the Children of Reuben, and to the Children of Gad, and to the half Tribe of Manasseh into the Land of Gilead.] Their Zeal did not so transport them, but that they prudently consider'd, it was fit first to be rightly inform'd of the Matter of Fact; and, if any thing was amiss, to endeavour to set it right by Counsel and Arguments, before they betook themselves to Arms: In order to which, they sent the Embassy here mention'd.

Phineas the Son of Eleazar the Priest.] A Person of very eminent Authority among them, and more likely to be receiv'd with due Regard, *Numb.* xxxi. 6.

Ver. 14. And with him ten Princes, of each chief House a Prince, throughout all the Tribes of Israel.] Which were nine and an half; so that a Prince was chosen out of the half Tribe of *Manasseh*, as well as out of the other Nine.

And each one was an Head of the House of their Fathers, among the Thousands of Israel.] That is, they were *Chiliarchs*, as the LXX calls them, and the Chief among such Rulers of Thousands in the several Tribes, *Exod.* xviii. 21.

Ver. 15. And they came unto the Children of Reuben, and to the Children of Gad, and to the half Tribe of Manasseh.] Who hearing of their coming, held a Congregation, it is likely, of the chief Persons among them, to receive their Message.

Into the Land of Gilead.] So he calls here, and *ver.* 13. the Country of the two Tribes and half; by the Name of an eminent Part of it, which is put for the Whole, as I observ'd upon *ver.* 9.

And they spake unto them, saying.] Made the following Speech in the Assembly of the two Tribes and half, by the Mouth of *Phineas*.

Ver. 16. Thus saith the whole Congregation of the LORD.] The Representatives of the whole People of *Israel*, in whose Name this Embassy was sent.

What

What Trespass is this that you have committed against the LORD God of Israel.] They were not able to express the Heinousness of it.

To turn away this Day from following the LORD.] So soon after they had seen his wonderful Works, and receiv'd such a Charge from Joshua, as he gave them at their Departure from Canaan, ver. 5.

In that you have built you an Altar.] which they supposed was for Sacrifice.

That you might rebel this Day against the LORD?] Which was direct Opposition to his express Command, immediately after he gave them the Law from Mount Sinai, Exod. xx. 24. And see the Places before named, upon ver. 12.

Ver. 17. Is the Iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleansed to this Day.] He instances in this, being himself an Actor in the Punishment of it, tho' it deserv'd still greater Punishment. For that's the Meaning of we are not cleansed; have not sufficiently suffer'd for that Sin; there being some remaining (he feared) that were infected with those Idolatrous Inclinations, whom God might justly cut off.

Although there was a Plague in the Congregation of the LORD.] Which destroyed Twenty and four Thousand, Numb. xxv. 9.

Ver. 18. But that you must turn away this Day from following the LORD?] Commit more Sins of that Nature. For whether they intended to worship other Gods, or to worship the God of Israel in a Manner he did not allow, it was, in his Esteem, Idolatry.

And it will be, seeing you rebel to day against the Lord.] It must be acknowledg'd, that they were a little too hasty in concluding their Brethren to be Rebels, before they had ask'd them for what Purpose they had erected this Altar, which should properly have been the first Question; but their pious Fear, lest God should be offended, made them immediately fall into this vehement Expostulation.

That to Morrow.] That is, quickly, or speedily.

He will be wroth with the whole Congregation of Israel.] With you for committing this Sin, and with us for not punishing it.

Ver. 19. Notwithstanding.] Or rather, and now, as the LXX translate the Hebrew Particle Veac.

If the Land of your Possession be unclean.] They imagin'd the Reubenites, and Gadites, and Manassites, might take their Land to be less Holy, for want of an Altar, and such a Token of the Divine Presence, as there was in the Tabernacle. This appears to be the Sense, by what follows: Which our Mr. Mede carries something further, in his Observations concerning the Appropriation of some Place for the Worship of God: Which so universally prevail'd from the Beginning, that it was believ'd, in those elder Times, that those Countries and Territories, wherein no place was set apart for God's Worship, were unhallow'd and unclean. This, he thinks, may be rightly gather'd from these Words. See Book II. upon Eccles. v. 1. p. 433.

Then pass ye over to the Land of the Possession of the LORD, wherein the LORD's Tabernacle dwelleth, and take Possession among us.]

This expresses a wonderful Zeal for God, and the common Good, wherewith they were at present possess'd; which made them desire rather to give up some of their own Land to them, than have them fall from their Religion.

But rebel not against the LORD, nor rebel against us.] They desire them not to break the common Bond that ty'd them to each other, as well as unto God, which was the same Religion.

In building an Altar, beside the Altar of the LORD our God.] Which was, in effect, to forsake the LORD.

Ver. 20. Did not Achan the Son of Zerah.] Descended from Zerah, vii. 17, 18.

Commit a Trespass in an accursed Thing.] This was a fresher Instance than that of Baal-Peor, ver. 17.

And Wrath fell upon all the Congregation of Israel? And that Man perished not alone in his Iniquity.] vii. 1, 2, &c. In this he explains what he said, ver. 18. that the whole Congregation was in danger to fall under the Divine Displeasure by their Apostacy.

Ver. 21. Then the Children of Reuben, and the Children of Gad, and the half Tribe of Manasseh, answered and said unto the Heads of the Thousands of Israel.] Some of the Heads of their Tribes made the following Reply, in the Name of all the rest.

*Ver. 22. The LORD God of Gods, the LORD God of Gods.] In the Hebrew, the God of Gods, the LORD; the God of Gods, the LORD. Where there are three Names of God, *El*, *Eloim*, and *Jehovah*; signifying that they own'd no other God, but him whom their Fore-fathers worship'd, by what Name soever he was call'd: That God, who is infinitely above all Creatures; the Fountain of all other Beings: And they double the Expression of their Devotion to him, that they might signify their Earnestness and Vehemency to purge themselves from the Crime objected to them.*

*Some of the ancient Jews thought a great Mystery is contain'd in these Words: For the Midrash Tillim upon the Fiftieth Psalm, (quoted by Mart. à Raymund, in Pugio Fidei, P. III. Distinct. 1. Cap. 4.) thus discourses, "What did they see, that they mention these Words twice, *El*, *Elohim*, *Jehovah*; *El*, *Elohim*, *Jehovah*? They said, *God*, *God*, *Jehovah*, "the first Time, because by these the World "was created; and they said *God*, *God*, *Jehovah*, "the second Time, because by these the Law "was given." Where he plainly insinuates a Plurality of Persons, saying, *Beken*, (by these) the World was created, &c. and refers to the first Words of Genesis, where it is said, *Elohim* created in the Beginning the Heaven and the Earth. No wonder then that Christians have been of the same Opinion, and thought these three Names denoted the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: As the Author of the old *Nitzacon* (Three hundred Years before that of *R. Lipman's*)*

man's) acknowledges, p. 59. Unto which he gives no Answer, but only this, That these three belong to one God; which we also acknowledge.

He knoweth.] They appeal to him who searcheth the Hearts of Men, and their most secret Designs.

And Israel they shall know.] By seeing their Constancy in the Religion of their Ancestors.

If it be in Rebellion, or if in Transgression against the LORD, (save us not this Day).] They turn their Speech on a sudden (as is usual in great Passion) unto God himself; desiring they may not live, but be immediately destroy'd by him, if they intended either to throw off his Worship and Service; or to worship him any other Way, than according to his Appointment.

Ver. 23. *That we have built us an Altar to turn from following the LORD, or if to offer Burnt-Offerings thereon, or Meat-Offerings, or if to offer Peace-offerings thereon, let the LORD himself require it.*] That is, they desire God to punish it, (for so the Phrase *require it* signifies, Deut. xviii. 19.) if they intended to offer any Sort of Sacrifice whatsoever, upon this Altar; which they acknowledge had been to turn from their Religion.

Ver. 24. *And if we have not rather done it for fear of this Thing.*] The Hebrew Word *Deaga* (which we translate *Fear*) signifies such Anxiety in their Mind, as gave them much Trouble; till they thought of this way to give themselves Ease.

Saying, In time to come your Children might speak unto our Children, saying, What have you to do with the LORD God of Israel?] They were afraid a Time might come, when they should be look'd upon as Aliens, who had no Right to come to the Tabernacle, and the Altar, to offer Sacrifice there. The Targum hath it, *What have you to do with the WORD of the LORD God of Israel?*

Ver. 25. *For the LORD hath made Jordan a Border between us and you, ye Children of Reuben, &c.*] Divided us from you by the River Jordan.

Ye have not Part in the LORD; so shall your Children make our Children cease from fearing the LORD.] Make them lose their Religion (which is call'd the *Fear of God*) by pretending they are none of the LORD's People. It was not likely, one would think, such a Thing should happen; but they did not know what Length of Time, and their Distance from them, might do, to make them forget their Relation unto them, and unto God; their Country being no Part of the Land of Promise, as Canaan was. Here again the Targum hath it; *Ye have no Part in the Word of the LORD.*

Ver. 26. *Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build us an Altar, not for Burnt-offering, or for Sacrifice.*] They again disclaim that, before they give the true Reason of what they had done.

Ver. 27. *But it may be a Witness between us and you, and our Generations after us.*] For it had been an ancient Way of preserving the Remembrance of Things, by raising such

Structures to testify to them, Gen. xxx. 48. and used afterwards by Joshua himself, xxxiv. 27.

That we might do the Service of the LORD before him, with our Burnt-offerings, &c.] Have the Privilege to come and Worship God at the Tabernacle, by offering such Sacrifices as the rest of the Israelites did.

That your Children may not say unto our Children, in time to come, Ye have no Part in the LORD.] That they might not be thrust away from the Altar when they brought their Sacrifices, under a Pretence that they were none of God's People, because they did not live in the Land which he promis'd to their Fathers. Here the Targum uses the same Language again, *No Part in the WORD of the LORD.*

Ver. 28. *Therefore said we, That it shall be, when they shall so say to us, or to our Generations in time to come, that we may say again.*] Have a Reply ready, if such a thing as we fear should happen.

Behold the Pattern of the Altar of the LORD which our Fathers made.] Which they could not have exactly imitated, if they had not been acquainted with it, and worshipp'd God there with their Brethren.

Not for Burnt-offering, nor for Sacrifice.] They thought this could not be too often repeated, that they might not be misunderstood.

But it is a Witness between us and you.] A publick Testimony that we ought not to be excluded from the Worship of God among you, being of the same Communion with you.

Ver. 29. *God forbid that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn this Day from following the LORD, to build an Altar for Burnt-offerings, &c.*] They utterly renounce all such Intentions, as they were suspected to have; protesting again most solemnly, they meant not to rebel against the WORD of the LORD, as the Targum again expresses it.

Ver. 30. *And when Phineas the Priest, and the Princes of the Congregation, and Heads of the Thousands of Israel which were with him, heard the Words that the Children of Reuben, &c. spake, it pleased them.*] They not only acquiesced in their Answer, but were very glad to hear it.

Ver. 31. *And Phineas the Son of Eleazar the Priest, said unto the Children of Reuben, &c.*] He spake to them in the Name of all his Company.

This Day we perceive that the LORD is among us, because ye have not committed this Trespass against the LORD.] He thankfully acknowledges the gracious Presence of God with them, in preserving the Reubenites, &c. from so great a Sin, as they fear'd they had committed; and all the People of Israel from such heavy Judgments, as it would have deserv'd.

Now you have delivered the Children of Israel out of the Hand of the LORD.] Who would have punished them for this Schism, if they had been guilty of it, and not censur'd for it. This whole Verse runs thus in the Targum; *This Day we perceive that the SCHECHINAH (or Divine Majesty) is among us, because ye have*

have not committed this Trespass against the WORD of the LORD; whereby you have delivered the Children of Israel out of the Hand of the WORD of the LORD.

Ver. 32. *And Phineas the Son of Eleazar the Priest, and the Princes, returned from the Children of Reuben and from the Children of Gad, out of the Land of Gilead, &c.]* Under Reuben and Gad, the half Tribe of Manasseh is included, both here, and ver. 25, 32, 33. as under the Land of Gilead is included the whole Country of these Tribes. The LXX. thought good to add here (and in all those Verses) expressly, *and the half Tribe of Manasseh*; tho' not in the Hebrew.

And brought them Word again.] Inform'd them how they found things among their Brethren.

Ver. 33. *And the Thing pleased the Children of Israel.]* They were satisfy'd in the Account they gave them; and approved of what their Brethren had done.

And they blessed God.] As Phinehas had done, that their Brethren had not offended the Divine Majesty, as they suspected.

And did not intend to go up against them in Battle.] Laid aside that Intention, (which was in their Mind, ver. 12.) and pursu'd it no further.

To destroy the Land wherein the Children of Reuben, and the Children of Gad dwell.] For so they thought they were Bound to do by the Command, Deut. xiii. 12, &c. which extended to a whole Country, as well as a City.

Ver. 34. *And the Children of Reuben, and the Children of Gad, called the Altar ED.]* That is, a Witness; for the Reason following.

For it shall be a Witness between us that the LORD is God.] That we own no other God but JEHOVAH; and him only will we worship, as he hath commanded. So the LXX *ὅτι Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς αὐτῶν ἐστίν*, that the LORD is their God.

In all this whole Relation from ver. 10. to the End of the Chapter, there being no Mention of Joshua, who is not once nam'd, either as sending these Embassadors, or receiving the Report which they brought back, some have thence entertain'd a Conceit, that Joshua was dead before this happen'd; and consequently that he could not be the Author of this Book. But it is manifest such Persons have a great Desire to weaken the Authority of these Holy Books, or else they would not draw such Consequences from such frivolous Observations. For it is evident, that all this came to pass not long after Joshua had dismiss'd these Tribes, with good Counsel, and with his Blessing: For they returning immediately after this to their own Country, went no further than Jordan before they erected this Altar; upon which those great Persons went to expostulate with them, and heard their Apology, and came back, and reported it. All this is told in one continu'd and coherent History, (as it were with one Breath) without the least Signification of any considerable Time that pass'd between one Part of it and the other. And the LXX were so well satisfy'd of this, that they took the Answer of

the Reubenites, Gadites, and Manassites to have been brought to Joshua; for they say he imposed the Name of ED upon the Altar. So their words are in the Vatican Edition, which is most common among us, *Καὶ ἐπωνόμασεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὸ Βωμὸν, &c.*

C H A P. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, a long time after that the LORD had given Rest to Israel from all their Enemies round about.]* Some take it to have been fourteen Years after their Conquest of the Country, xi. 23. and seven Years after the Division of it. See xiv. 10.

That Joshua waxed old and stricken in Age.] This was said of him before the Land was divided, (xiii. 1.) and a Portion thereof given unto him: Where he built a City; which took up so much Time, that probably he was now in the last Year of his Life.

Ver. 2. *And Joshua called for all Israel.]* Sent out a Summons to them, to come to him at Timnab-Serah, where he liv'd, as the Jews will have it; but rather to Shiloh, where they might appear before God, as well as before him, and have the greater Regard to his Words.

And for their Elders, &c.] The Word *and* is not in the Hebrew Text, and therefore these Words are an Explication of what he means by *all Israel*: Not all the People, (who could not, without great Inconvenience, come thither, and could not all hear him if they did) but their Elders; that is, the great Sanhedrim, as they were call'd in future Times; and *for their Heads*, that is of their Tribes and Families, and *for their Judges*, who were settled in all the lesser Cities; and *for their Officers*, who attended upon the Judges to execute their Sentence.

And said unto them, I am old and stricken in Age.] He would make them sensible, that this might be the last Time he should be able to speak of them, which might move them to give greater Attention unto what he said.

Ver. 3. *And ye have seen.]* Or rather, *behold ye have seen*; for so the Particle *ve* (which we translate *and*) sometimes signifies, Gen. xxiv. 31. *Behold, I have prepared the House, &c.*

All that the LORD hath done unto all these Nations, because of you.] For your Sake; that he might make Room for you in their Country, by expelling them out of it.

For the LORD your God is he that hath fought for you.] See i. 9. xi. 8, 10. 42. xi. 6. The Targum here saith (as in x. 42). *The LORD your God, his WORD fought for you.* See xiv. 12.

Ver. 4. *Behold, I have divided unto you by Lot, these Nations that remain, to be an Inheritance for your Tribes, from Jordan, with all the Nations that I have cut off, even unto the great Sea Westward.]* The Meaning is, he had divided among them the whole Land of Canaan, from Jordan in the East, to the Mediterranean in the

the West; as well that Part of the Land which remain'd still unconquer'd, as that out of which they had expell'd the ancient Inhabitants.

Ver. 5. *And the LORD your God he shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your Sight, &c.*] This relates unto those who remained unsubdu'd (mention'd in the Beginning of the foregoing Verse) whom they should undoubtedly conquer, and possess their Country, if they adhered to God in faithful Obedience; as he exhorts them in the following Part of this Chapter.

Ver. 6. *Be ye therefore very courageous, to keep, and to do.*] Or, (as it may be translated) *by observing and doing.*

All that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses.] Which was the Condition upon which God promis'd to continue them in the Possession of this Land. By this it is evident, that the Book of the Law of Moses was extant in those Days, and that the People read it.

That ye turn not aside therefrom, to the Right Hand or to the Left.] See upon Deut. v. 32.

Ver. 7. *That ye come not among these Nations, these that remain amongst you.*] Have no Familiarity with them, especially by Marriage.

Neither make mention of the Name of their Gods.] With any Sort of Respect to them. See Exod. xxiii. 13. and Deut. xii. 3.

Nor cause to swear by them.] Not make a Gentile swear by the Name of his God; which was utterly unlawful, as Selden observes out of Maimonides in Aboda Zara. See Lib. 2. de Jure Nat. & Gent. Cap. 13. For this was to suppose they had Knowledge of Mens Thoughts, and Power to punish those that forswore themselves. And the forbidding this, was also to secure them from making Leagues and Covenants with the Gentiles, which they would not look upon as binding without an Oath.

Neither serve them.] By offering Sacrifices, or Praying, or making Vows to them, tho' never so secretly.

Nor bow yourselves to them.] As all inward Reverence, so all outward Respect likewise was forbidden to be paid to them; especially open and publick Acts of Worship. Interpreters here observe a Gradation from Familiarity with them, to the most gross Idolatry, in which their Friendship with these People concluded.

Ver. 8. *But cleave unto the LORD your God, as you have done unto this Day.*] A remarkable Instance of which they had all lately given, when the Nine Tribes and half were so unanimously resolved to punish Idolatry, with the Extirpation of those that were guilty of it; (xxii. 33.) and the other also most zealously disclaimed all Inclinations to it, ver. 22, 29.

Ver. 9. *For the LORD had driven out from before you great Nations, and strong.*] The seven Nations of Canaan, who dwelt in strong Cities, and brought mighty Armies against them, with Horses and Chariots, and were some of them Gigantick Persons, xi. 4, 22.

But as for you, no Man hath been able to stand before you unto this Day.] None that gave them Battle; tho' from some of their strong Cities they had not yet driven them. See xxi. 44.

Ver. 10. *One Man of you shall chase a Thousand.*] He gives them Hope of a good Success for the future, as they had hitherto. Levit. xxvi. 8.

For the LORD your God is he that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you.] But he would not have them ascribe it to their own Courage, but to the Divine Power, Deut. xxxii. 30. Here again the Targum hath it the WORD of the Lord &c. as ver. 3.

Ver. 11. *Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God.*] It highly therefore concerned them to keep close to the Worship and Service of God alone, with sincere Love to him; since all their Happiness depended upon his Favour to them; for that this is meant by loving God, appears from the following Verse; and from Deut. vi. 4, 5. x. 12. xi. 22.

Ver. 12. *Else if you do in any wise go back.*] From God, and fall to Idolatry.

And cleave unto the Remnant of these Nations, even these that remain among you.] Embrace their Errors, as the Vulgar translates it; which they might easily do by making Friendship with them, as the Phrase properly signifies.

And shall make Marriages with them.] Which was the Effect of their Familiarity with them.

And go in unto them, and they to you.] The same Thing that was said before in other Words, which only signify the Consummation of Marriage; which was strictly forbidden them, Exod. xxiii. 32. xxxiv. 12, 15, 16. Deut. vii. 3.

Ver. 13. *Know for a Certainty that the LORD your God will no more drive out any of these Nations from before you.*] As he had hitherto done, and promis'd still to do, if they would be obedient, ver. 8, 9. The Targum saith the WORD of the LORD will no more drive, &c.

But they shall be Snarcs and Traps unto you.] Remain in the Land to inveigle and seduce them into further Impiety. See Exod. xxxiv. 12. Deut. vii. 4, 16.

And Scourges in your Sides.] Bring sore Chastisements upon them; for this alludes to the Lashes that were given Offenders upon their Sides, Eccclus. xxx. 12. xlii. 5.

And Thorns in your Eyes.] Most grievously afflict them. See Numb. xxxiii. 55.

Until ye perish from off this good Land, which the LORD your God hath given you.] For with the Love and Favour of God, they forfeited also their Inheritance which he had bestowed on them.

Ver. 14. *Behold, this Day I am going the Way of all the Earth.*] Shall die shortly, as all Men must one time or other; therefore hearken to the Words of a dying Man.

And ye know in all your Hearts, and in all your Souls.] Are all fully convinced.

That not one Thing hath failed, of all the good Things which the LORD your God spake concerning you, &c.] See upon xxi. 45. And God was as good as his Word ever after, as Solomon acknowledges, 1 Kings viii. 56.

Ver. 15. *therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good Things are come upon you which the LORD your God promised you; so shall the LORD.]* When he ceased to be their God.

Bring upon you all evil Things, &c.] According to what Moses had predicted at large, Levit. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii. In my Annotations upon which last Chapter, I have demonstrated, that not one Thing hath failed of all the Threatnings there mentioned, but all literally fulfilled to a Tittle: For God's Faithfulness is no less visible in fulfilling his Threatnings, than his Promises.

Ver. 16. *When ye have transgressed the Covenant of the LORD your God which he commanded you, and have gone and served other Gods, &c.]* This was the principal Thing in the Covenant, that they should have no other Gods but him alone; as I have observed from a great Number of Places in the Book of Deuteronomy.

Then shall the Anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good Land which he hath given unto you.] See Deut. xxviii. 20.

C H A P. XXIV.

Ver. 1. **A**ND Joshua gathered all the Tribes of Israel.] It is likely that Joshua, living longer than he expected, when he made the foregoing Speech to them, called the People together once more, to give them good Advice before he died; as Moses made a great many Speeches to them (I observ'd upon the Book of Deuteronomy) before his Departure from them: Or, perhaps, it was the usual Custom of Joshua to take Occasion often to call them together, and put them in mind of their Duty. And these two Exhortations, which he made to them in the latter End of his Life, he thought fit to record.

To Schechem.] Some will have this Place to be the same with Shiloh; call'd here Schechem because it was in the Country of Schechem, and not far from it. The LXX also call it Σηλώ, both here, and ver. 25. It is plain also, by the latter End of the Verse, that they assembled there where God dwelt, which was in Shiloh: Yet all this is not sufficient to make us think they were not summon'd to the City call'd Schechem: For there is no good Reason for calling Shiloh by this Name; it being (as St. Hierom saith) ten Miles from Schechem: And all other Copies of the LXX, but the Vatican, having Συχέμ, not Σηλώ. And as for their appearing before God at this Place, I shall give an Account of it in the End of this Verse; and now only say, that it is likely Joshua, who was the supreme Governor of God's People, being old and infirm, caused the Ark, for this Time, to be brought to Schechem, being near to him, that he might renew the Covenant

with the People in that Place where Abraham first settled, when he came into the Land of Canaan, and where he built an Altar, and God establish'd his Covenant with him, (Gen. xii. 6, 7.) and where the Patriarchs were bury'd, (Acts vii. 15, 16.) and where he was about to lay the Bones of Joseph, (ver. 32. of this Chapter) and where the Israelites, at their first Entrance into Canaan, renew'd their Covenant with God, Josh. viii. 30, &c. For Ebal and Gerzim were hard by Schechem.

And called for the Elders of Israel, and for their Heads, and for their Judges, and for their Officers.] The same Persons mention'd xxiii. 2. Which Places give us a distinct Account of the Persons concern'd in the Government of the Israelites; as Const. L' Empereur observes, in his Annotations upon Bertram de Repub. Judaica, P. 362, 395, 396.

And they presented themselves before God.] At his Tabernacle; which was, as I said, for the present brought hither. For it is plain, as Cornel. Bertram observes, (L. de Republ. Judaica, Cap. 15. P. 249.) the Kings or chief Rulers of Israel had a Power to carry the Ark from the Place of its constant Residence, when there was a great Occasion for it, 1 Sam. iv. 3, 4. 2 Sam. xv. 24. And now at this great Assembly of the whole Nation by their Representatives, there was a just Reason for its being brought hither, (seeing Joshua could not conveniently, by reason of his great old Age, go to Shiloh) that it might be a more solemn Meeting, being held in the Presence of God. Mr. Mede hath another Notion of this Matter; for he thinks that there was a *Proseucha*, or *praying Place*, erected by the Israelites (at least by the Ephraimites, in whose Lot Schechem was) after they had subdued the Country, that they might resort hither to call upon God, when they were not able to go as far as the Tabernacle. Many such Places he makes account there were; of which see more on ver. 26.

Ver. 2. *And Joshua said unto all the People.]* That were there present, viz. the Elders, Heads, Judges, and Officers, mention'd in the foregoing Verse; who were to report his Words to all the People.

Thus saith the LORD God of Israel.] This is an Argument, that Joshua spake all that follows by a Divine Impulse; for he begins his Speech in the solemn Form used by the Prophets (thus saith the LORD) and introduces God himself speaking in his own Person. From whence it may be inferr'd, he was a Prophet, as well as the Ruler of God's People.

Your Fathers dwelt on the other side of the Flood.] That is, of the River Euphrates.

In old Time.] A long time before they came from Ur of the Chaldees into Haran, Gen. xi. 28, 31.

Even Terah, the Father of Abraham, and the Father of Nabor.] These were Terah's two eldest Sons, Gen. xi. 26.

And they served other Gods.] All agree that Terah was an Idolater, living in that Country from whence, as many think, Idolatry first came, Gen. xxxi. 19. The Jews in Schalsch. Hakkabala say, he was a Priest, see Hottinger in his

his *Smegma Orientale*, Cap. 8. P. 290. Others of them say, he was a *Statuary*, who made Images of several *Materials*, λέγων τέρας εἶναι θεόν, saying, *These were Gods*; as *Suidas* speaks, who, together with *Epiphanius*, is of this Opinion. See *Bochart*. in his *Phaleg*. Lib. 2. Cap. 5. *Abraham* himself also, most agree, was bred up in the same Idolatry; tho' some few deny it; as *Hottinger* observes in the same Place; where he alledges the Words of *Maimonides*, who saith, he was converted to the Worship of the Creator of All in the 48th Year of his Age; and that his Father *Terah* also repented, and worshipped the true and only God. See upon *Gen.* xi. 31.

Ver. 3. *And I took your Father Abraham from the other Side of the Flood.*] From that Idolatrous Country where he was born and educated. Which is mention'd as a singular Obligation upon the *Israelites* to adhere unto God, who singled out the Father of their Families, so many Ages ago, to be his Worshipper. This *Maimonides*, having Occasion to mention these Words of *Joshua*, represents in very patheticall Expressions: "How great is the Benefit, saith he, that we receive by these Precepts, which have freed us from such a grand Error in which our Father was educated, and converted us to the true Belief of God? by teaching us that he created all Things, and that he is to be worshipp'd and lov'd, and fear'd, and he only; and that there is no great Labour required to do his Will, but only the Love and Fear of him, in which two all his Worship is perfected, &c. *More Nevochim*, P. 3. Cap. 29.

And led him.] From *Charran*, after his Father's Death.

Throughout all the Land of Canaan.] Till he came to *Schechem*, (where the *Israelites* now were assembled) and so to *Beth-el*; and so on still toward the South of the Land of *Canaan*, *Gen.* xii. 6, 8, 9.

And multiplied his Seed, and gave him Isaac.] In order to the fulfilling of his Promise, *Gen.* xv. 5. he bestow'd a Son upon him, when he was an hundred Years old, *Gen.* xxi. 1, 2, &c.

Ver. 4. *And I gave unto Isaac, Jacob and Esau.*] Who had a very numerous Issue, *Gen.* xxv. 24, &c.

And I gave unto Esau Mount Seir to possess it.] He and his Brother being grown so rich, and their Cattle so increas'd, that there was not Room for them both, in the Land of *Canaan*, where they sojourn'd, *Gen.* xxxvi. 6, 7, 8.

And Jacob and his Children went down into Egypt.] Tho' *Esau* left the Land of *Canaan* entirely to him, yet the Time was not come when God intended to plant his Posterity in it; but they were forced to go down into *Egypt*, where they suffer'd a cruel Bondage, *Gen.* xlvi. 6. *Exod.* i. 11, &c. So the *LXX* explain it.

Ver. 5. *I sent Moses also and Aaron.*] And when they were multiply'd exceedingly, (*Exod.* i. 7, 14, 20.) these two great Persons were sent to deliver them from that Bondage, *Exod.* iii. 10. iv. 14.

And I plagued Egypt, according to that I did amongst them.] Smote it with those Signs (as the *LXX* explain) which are related in that Book of *Exodus*.

And afterward I brought you out.] By those wonderful Plagues they were at last constrain'd to let the *Israelites* depart, as they desired, *Exod.* xii. 31, &c.

Ver. 6. *And I brought your Fathers out of Egypt, and you came unto the Sea.*] When he had brought them out (as is related *Exod.* xii. 40.) they were led by God through the Way of the Wilderness of the Red Sea, *Exod.* xiii. 18. by which they encamp'd, and were in very great Straits, xiv. 9.

And the Egyptians pursued after your Fathers with Chariots and Horsemen into the Red Sea.] Imagining them to be in such Difficulties, that they could not escape out of their Hand, *Exod.* xiv. 3.

Ver. 7. *And when they cried unto the LORD, he put Darknes between you and the Egyptians.*] So that when they had overtaken them, they could not see where they were, *Exod.* xiv. 10, 19, 20.

And brought the Sea upon them, and covered them.] Inasmuch that they march'd after them into the Sea, where they were overwhelmed, *Exod.* xiv. 27, 28.

And your Eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt.] Or, upon the Egyptians. He appeals to them for the Truth of this, who had seen them lie dead upon the Sea Shore, *Exod.* xiv. 30, 31. For their *Elders*, to whom he now speaks, (*ver.* 1.) were all then there: and now not only Men of great Dignity, but (many of them at least) of great Age.

And ye dwelt in the Wilderness a long Season.] Forty Years, *Numb.* xiv. 33. where he gave them a Law, and fed them miraculously, &c.

Ver. 8. *And I brought you into the Land of the Amorites, which dwelt on the other side Jordan.*] Towards the latter End of that Time, *Numb.* xxi. 20, 21.

And they fought with you, and I gave them into your Hand, &c.] See there, *ver.* 23, 24, 33, &c.

Ver. 9. *Then Balak, the Son of Zippor, King of Moab, arose, and warred against Israel.*] He did not actually draw out his Forces and fall upon them, but he prepared them and made them ready, with an Intention to drive them from his Coast, if *Balaam* could have disabled them by his Curses; which sufficiently appears from *Numb.* xxii. 11. *David Camius* therefore notes pertinently, the Design or Contrivance is reputed the Work itself.

And sent and called Balaam the Son of Beor to curse you.] See *Numb.* xxii. 5, 6, &c.

Ver. 10. *But the LORD would not hearken unto Balaam.*] Who had a great Inclination to do what *Balak* desired; and one would think by this, begg'd of God to give him Leave to use his Arts to do the *Israelites* Mischief: And when this was deny'd him; yet obtaining Licence to go to the King of *Moab*, he went with these Intentions, and with Hope he might prevail with God to suffer him to prosecute his Design, *Numb.* xxii. 32.

Therefore he blessed you still: So I delivered you out of his Hand.] He all along pronounced nothing but Blessings on them, instead of Curses, notwithstanding all the Attempts that were made to the contrary, *Numb. xxiii. and xxiv.* Which was to be ascribed to the overruling Power of God, who hinder'd him from hurting them.

Ver. 11. And ye went over Jordan.] Having vanquish'd the two Kings of the *Amorites* on the other Side of it, and got quit of all other Enemies, (the *Moabites* and *Midianites*) God in a wonderful Manner brought them into *Canaan*, by drying up the River *Jordan* to give them a Passage over it.

And came unto Jericho.] Which was the first Place they besieged, being the nearest City to *Jordan*.

And the Men of Jericho fought against you.] We do not read of any Sallies they made upon the *Israelites*; but they shutting their Gates, to defend the City against them, it is likely flung Stones from their Wall upon them.

The Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Gergashites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.] After which, it appears by this Book, that they fought with all the *Seven Nations of Canaan*; who engaged them in several Bodies, and at several times: Which was done so lately, that there was no need he should repeat all the Particulars mention'd in the 10th, 11th, and 12th Chapters. But by the Division of their Land among the *Israelites*, it was very well known to them, that (as this Verse concludes) *God had delivered them into their Hands*. It is observable, that the *Gergashites* are here particularly mentioned, as fighting against *Israel* with the rest of the seven Nations; which makes *Grotius* his Observation doubtful, of their Surrender at *Joshua's* first Summons; (see *xvi. 10.*) but if that be not true, it is manifest some of them remain'd unsubdu'd, and had a Settlement in *Canaan* in our Saviour's Days: When we read of the Country of the *Gergesens*, the Inhabitants of which were not *Jews*, as appears by their breeding Swine. See *Constant. L'Empereur* in his Annotations on *Bava Kama*, P. 180.

Ver. 12. And I sent the Hornet before you, which drove them out from before you.] This may signify either, that before the *Israelites* came into those Parts, God sent Hornets, which so infested them, that many of them were forced to leave their Country, and flee into other Places; or, that when they came to give them Battle, these Hornets made such Assaults upon them, as facilitated the Victory. This God promis'd in *Exod. xxiii. 27, 28. Deut. vii. 20.* and here *Joshua* remembers how true he was to his Word. The Book of *Wisdom* calls them *προδρομους*, the Forerunners of God's Host; and *Kimchi* saith, they flew in the Eyes of the *Canaanites*, and made them so blind, that they could not see to fight.

Even the two Kings of the Amorites.] *Sibon* and *Og*, whose Country was first infested with them; and afterward the Kings of *Canaan*, and their People, felt their Fury: For this is a short Expression, like that which I observ'd *xxii. 10.*

But not with thy Sword, or with thy Bow.] The Swarms of Hornets, it seems, did greater Execution than the Armies of the *Israelites*. We do not read of their assaulting the *Canaanites* in any of the Battles that *Joshua* fought with them; for he did not think fit to mention it particularly in the foregoing Account of his Victory, but now in general, when he was to sum up all the Mercies of God to them.

Ver. 13. And I have given you a Land for which you did not labour, and Cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them.] As *Joshua* had observ'd before, *xi. 13.*

Of the Vineyards and Olive-yards which ye planted not, do ye eat.] According to his Promise, *Deut. vi. 10, 11.*

Ver. 14. Now therefore fear the LORD.] The Fear of God commonly signifies his Worship and Service, unto which he exhorts them in the following Words; which seem to relate to all outward Acts of Worship; as this to the inward Reverence they owed to him in their Minds, as the only God.

And serve him in Sincerity and Truth.] Worship no other God together with him, nor mix any Idolatrous Rites with those prescribed by him; but serve him constantly and purely according to his Law, which is the Truth, *Psalms cxix. 142.*

And put away the Gods which your Fathers served on the other side the Flood.] See *ver. 2.* This intimates, that there were now some Idolaters among them, tho' secretly in private, and not openly; For they had lately express'd so unanimously such a Zeal against any Appearance of Idolatry, that one cannot think there was any known Worshipper of other Gods now in the Nation.

And in Egypt.] Where they began to be corrupted in their Religion, as is often suggested by the Prophet *Ezekiel, xx. 6, 7, 8, 18. xxiii. 3, 8, 19, 21, 27.*

And serve ye the LORD.] He repeats it again, as a Thing of the greatest Moment, that they should worship the LORD alone.

Ver. 15. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, chuse you this Day whom you will serve.] He could not think they would turn Atheists, and have no God at all; and he was unwilling to suppose, that they would prefer any other God to Him, who had obliged them by such Benefits as are before mention'd: Which he expresses in this Rhetorical Form of Speech; which is as much as if he had said, If you like not the LORD's Service, tell me whom ye will serve? Where do you hope to find a God comparable to Him?

Whether the Gods that your Fathers served, that were on the other side of the Flood.] That had some Colour for it, because of its Antiquity; but was condemn'd by *Abraham* their Father, who forsook that Religion, and was blessed for it by God with the Inheritance he had now given them in the Land of *Canaan*.

Or the Gods of the Amorites, in whose Land ye dwell.] That was so absurd, as to need no Confutation; for those Gods could not defend their Servants that worshipped them.

But as for me, I and my House, we will serve the LORD.] He declares his firm Resolution (let them take what Course they pleas'd) together with his whole Family, (as far as he could oblige them) to worship the LORD alone.

Ver. 16. *And the People answered and said.]* All the Elders and others there present, and all those to whom they reported what Joshua had said, made this Answer.

God forbid that we should forsake the LORD.] The Hebrew Word *Chalila* (which we translate *God forbid*) imports a great Abhorrence and Abomination of that which is mention'd with it.

To serve other Gods.] Which they now look'd upon as the greatest Madness.

Ver. 17. *For the LORD our God, he it is that brought us up and our Fathers out of the Land of Egypt, from the House of Bondage, and which did those great Signs in our Sight, &c.]* They gave such powerful Reasons why they should serve none but the LORD alone, that if they had always preserv'd them as fresh in their Minds, as they were now, they could never have gone after other Gods.

Ver. 18. *And the LORD drove out from before us all the People.]* That is, of Canaan.

Even the Amorites which dwelt in the Land.] In the Hebrew, and the Amorites; that is, together with the two Kings of the Amorites, whom they had driven before out of the Land on the other side of Jordan.

Therefore will we also serve the LORD.] Follow the Example of Joshua, their Leader, ver. 15.

For he is our God.] As they were convinced by their wonderful Deliverance out of Egypt; all the great Signs he wrought there, and after they came from thence; and the Care he took of them in the Wilderness, and all other Places; and now by their late Victories over most potent Enemies, whom he had driven out of their Country, and put the Israelites in Possession of it.

Ver. 19. *And Joshua said unto the People, Ye cannot serve the LORD.]* This is far from signifying an utter Impossibility of it; (for that would have contradicted his Exhortation, ver. 14.) but that they were so very prone to Idolatry, that they would not be able to persevere stedfast in their Resolution, unless they took Care constantly to reflect upon, and lay to Heart, what they had now acknowledg'd, (ver. 17, 18.) which he was afraid they would not do.

For he is an holy God, he is a jealous God.] Who having no Equal, (that's meant by *holy*) will endure no Rival; and therefore they who communicated the Worship proper to him, unto any other besides him, or with him, were deem'd to deny his incomparable Sanctity, and said in Scripture to *prophane* his Holy Name, as Mr. Mede observes, see Book I. Discourse 2. It is a just Remark which Mr. Alix here makes, in his excellent Book (*of the Judgment of the Jewish Church against the Unitarians*, Chap. ix.) that here is a plain Idea of a Plurality of Persons in the Godhead, the Words in the Hebrew being, *He is the Holy God*; like that *Eccles. xii. 1. Remember thy Creators*. And indeed this is a Place anciently noted by the Christian Doctors,

(whom the Jews call Hereticks) who ask'd R. Samlai, as the Jews themselves tell us, what he had to answer unto these Words, Ye cannot serve the LORD, *Ki Elobim Kedoshim Hu*, because he is the Holy Gods? Who had nothing to reply, but that Joshua doth not say; *They are the Holy Gods*, but *He is the Holy Gods*. Which is the very same that we affirm, that he is Three in One. This is in *Bereschith Rabba*, mention'd by Raymund in his *Pugio Fidei*, and by J. Wagenfeil in his *Confutation of Lipman's Carmen Memoriale*, P. 129.

He will not forgive your Transgressions, nor your Sin.] But make those who assume any other Deity into Fellowship with him in Worship, feel how he resents such Dishonour done to his Divine Majesty.

Ver. 20. *If you forsake the LORD, and serve strange Gods.]* Either the Gods of the Amorites, before mention'd, or those that their Fathers anciently serv'd.

Then he will turn, and do you Hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you Good.] Alter the Course of his Providence towards you, and send as many Curses upon you, as he hath done Blessings; according to the Prediction of Moses in *Deut. xxviii. 63*.

Ver. 21. *And the People said unto Joshua, Nay, but we will serve the LORD.]* They desire him to entertain a better Opinion of them; for they persist in their well-grounded Resolution, ver. 16, 17, 18.

Ver. 22. *And Joshua said unto the People, Ye are Witnesses against yourselves, that ye have chosen the LORD to serve him.]* This solemn Profession, which they had thus deliberately and publickly made, he tells them, would testify against them, and condemn them, if they proved false to God.

And they said, We are Witnesses.] Here they renew that Choice of God for their King, which their Forefathers made when they came out of Egypt, (in the xixth and xxivth Chapters of *Exodus*) and acknowledg'd they should be self-condemn'd, if they did not make it good.

Ver. 23. *Now therefore put away (said he) the strange Gods that are among you.]* See ver. 14. This is an Argument that he was a Prophet, as I said upon ver. 2. that he saw their inward Disposition, and the Secret Affection they had to Idols. For tho' there was no publick Idol worshipped, yet he knew, by the Spirit of Prophecy, that they had their *Penates*, (as the Romans call'd them) *Household Gods*; or, rather, Gods which they worship'd secretly in their Closets, as our Dr. Spencer observes, *Lib. III Dissert. 1. Cap. 3*. These being the very same Words which Jacob used to his Household, when he suspected them of the same Crime, tho' there was no open Idolatry practis'd among them, *Gen. xxxv. 2*.

And incline your Heart unto the LORD God of Israel.] Settle your Affection upon the LORD alone, who you profess is your Sovereign, to whom the whole Nation hath infinite Obligations, ver. 16, 17, 18.

Ver. 24. *And the People said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and his Voice we will obey.]* They repeat their profess'd Resolution

tion a third Time, which made it more binding; and a stronger Witness against them, if they forsook the LORD.

Ver. 25. *So Joshua made a Covenant with the People that Day.*] Engaged them to make good this solemn Profession, by renewing the Covenant they had formerly enter'd into, both in the Time of Moses, and in his Time: Wherein they promised to worship him alone, and be obedient to him; and he promised to do for them as he had formerly done; that is, be their constant Protector and Benefactor. There are those who think this Covenant was now establish'd by Sacrifice, as it was when they came out of Egypt, *Exod. xxiv. 4, 5.* and when they came into Canaan, *Josh. viii. 31.* But as there is no Mention of an Altar, or any Offering, so it is not likely, that Joshua would offer any Sacrifice, but in the place which God had chosen, which was *Shiloh*: For tho' we suppose the Sanctuary to have been brought hither for a little Time, yet it was not the settled Place of the Divine Residence.

And set them a Statute and an Ordinance.] It is commonly interpreted, that he propounded to them in brief the Precepts of the Law; which are the Conditions of the Covenant: But it may be expounded, that he enacted this Covenant to have the Force of a Statute and Ordinance, or *Judgment*, as it in the *Hebrew*.

In Shechem.] So that it was call'd hereafter, the Covenant or Statute in *Shechem*, where they all made repeated Professions of Love to God.

Ver. 26. *And Joshua wrote these Words.*] From whence, as I observ'd in the Preface, the *Talmudists* gather Joshua to have been the Author of this Book. As if these Words signify'd, that he, after the Example of Moses, committed to Writing all that we read in this Book, and added it at the End of the five Books written by Moses, as it is now annex'd to them. But it must be confess'd, that one cannot certainly infer more from those Words, than that he wrote the Words of the foregoing Covenant; and this he did, as it here follows, in the very Book of the Law of God, that it might be preserv'd in everlasting Remembrance.

In the Book of the Law of God.] Which was laid up, by Moses his Order, in the Side of the Ark, *Deut. xxxi. 24, 25, 26.* From whence he took it and wrote in it all that had pass'd between him and the People, that they might look upon this as a sacred Transaction, as indeed it was, and most carefully observe it: And perhaps he wrote it also in that Copy of the Law of God, which the Princes had for the Use of every Tribe. See upon *Deut. xxxi. 9.*

And took a great Stone and set it up there.] As a Monument of the Covenant now made. Which was an ancient Way of preserving the Memory of things past, as appears by what Jacob did, *Gen. xxviii. 18.* and they themselves had lately done, *iv. 3, 20, 21, &c.* Upon this Stone it is probable there was an Inscription, signifying what it meant.

Under an Oak that was by the Sanctuary of the LORD.] This is one Argument Mr. Mede uses (in the Place I mention'd upon *ver. 1.*) to

prove that the Sanctuary, properly so call'd, cannot be here meant, because it was unlawful to plant any Trees near it, *Deut. xvi. 21, 22.* and therefore he understands hereby a *Proseucha*, or *Praying-place*, which, in Memory of Jacob, was here at *Shechem*. And he doth plainly shew there were both such Places, and also *Synagogues*, in several Parts of the Country: the former being in the Fields, open on the Top; the latter in Cities, cover'd as our Houses are. And I may add, that we do read of *Sanctuaries*, in the Plural Number, that were among them in After-times, *Amos vii. 9.* Yet it must be acknowledg'd, that the Argument he uses from the Place I mention'd in *Deuteronomy*, is not cogent: For tho' they be prohibited there to plant a Grove of any Trees near God's Altar, after the Manner of the *Gentiles*, this did not make it unlawful to set up the Sanctuary under a Tree that had been planted before; especially when it was done only for a short Time, and not to make it the settled Place for its constant Abode.

But there are those who avoid this seeming Difficulty, by referring these Words in the *Sanctuary of the LORD*, (as they may be translated) not to the Sanctuary. And thus, it is going before, the *Book of the Law of God*; which was in the Sanctuary. And thus, it is certain, Words are sometimes to be connected, not with those immediately preceding, but with those which are more remote. A notable Instance of which we have in *Gen. xiii. 10.* where those Words in the End of the Verse, *As thou comest unto Zoar*, cannot be join'd to the *Land of Egypt*, just before mention'd, but to the *Plain of Jordan*, in the very beginning of the Verse.

Ver. 27. *And Joshua said unto all the People, This Stone shall be a Witness unto us.*] As Laban said concerning the Heap of Stones which he and Jacob rais'd, *Gen. xxxi. 48, 51, 52.*

For it hath heard all the Words of the LORD which he spake unto us.] All those Speeches which had been deliver'd by Joshua in the Name of God, (*ver. 2, 3, &c.*) and all that the *Israelites* had answer'd to him: That is, the Covenant between God and them; which being renew'd before this Stone, it is said, by an elegant Figure, to have heard what was spoken; because it would remain to testify and declare to all Posterity the Engagements that lay upon them. Thus the Prophet calls to all Creatures, *Hear, O Heaven, &c.*

It shall be therefore a Witness unto you, lest ye deny your God.] To accuse them; as much as if it had heard what they said, and could speak against them.

Ver. 28. *And so Joshua let the People depart, every one unto his Inheritance.*] And the Sanctuary of the LORD returned to its settled Place, which was in *Shiloh*.

Ver. 29. *And it came to pass, that after these Things.*] Not long after, in all Probability.

Joshua the Son of Nun, the Servant of the LORD, died.] Leaving this honourable Character behind him, which Moses also had, that he had serv'd the LORD faithfully. 1

Being an hundred and ten Years old.] Of the same age with *Joseph*. How many of these Years he spent in *Canaan*, as the Chief Ruler of God's People, Mens Opinions are very widely different: For some say he lived twenty and eight Years after they came over *Jordan*, (which is the Opinion of the *Jews* in *Seder Olam*) tho' others will not allow so much as the odd eight Years, but say it was only seven. There is a middle Opinion maintain'd by others, that he was their Governor seventeen Years. See *Bonfrerius*.

Ver. 30. *And they buried him in the Border of his Inheritance in Timnath-Serab.]* Called in *Judges* ii. 9. *Timneth-heres*; because of the Image of the Sun engraven on his Sepulchre, in Memory of that famous Day, when the Sun stood still till he had compleated his Victory. (Chap. x.) So several of the *Jewish* Authors say, particularly he who wrote the Book put up by *Hottinger* under the Title of *Cippi Hebraici*, P. 32. where he saith, his Father *Nun* was bury'd here, and *Caleb* the Son of *Jephunneh*. See also his *Smegma Orientale*, Cap. 8. p. 523. And thus *Tully* saith, a Sphere and a Cylinder were put upon the Tomb of *Archimedes*.

On the North Side of the Hill Gaash.] So called, as the *Jews* fable, because it trembled and quaked, at the Burial of *Joshua*, whose Death the People did not enough bewail. Which Fancy, it is likely, came into their Head, because there is no Mention here of any Days of Mourning for him, as there were for *Aaron* and *Moses*. In which *St. Hierom* and other of the Fathers think there is a Mystery, viz. that under the Law, when the Kingdom of Heaven was not yet open'd, they had Reason to mourn and weep for the Death of their Friends; but under the Gospel, wherein is reveal'd by the Lord *Jesus* (of whom *Joshua* was a Figure) the wonderful Love of God to Men, &c. there is no Reason for Mourning and Lamentation, but rather for Rejoicing.

Of this Hill see *Const. L'Empereur* upon *Benjamin* his *Itinerarium*, who calls *Montpellier* by this Name of *Har-Gaash*, the trembling Hill, p. 142, 143.

Ver. 31. *And Israel served the LORD all the Days of Joshua.]* No Idolatry appeared among them publickly while he lived, (whatsoever private Superstition might be practis'd, ver. 14, 23.) for all that wicked Generation which came out of *Egypt* (except the younger Sort) were consumed in the Wilderness, before *Joshua* took the Conduct of them. And God kept them there so many Years, as wasted them also, for this Reason, among others, that they might forget the idolatrous Custom of *Egypt*, unto which it early appear'd, by their making the Golden Calf, they were strongly inclined. Thus *St. Chrysostom* discourses, Lib. i. *advers. vitæ Monast. vituper.* God, saith he, that the Children of *Israel* might unlearn the evil Customs of *Egypt*, brought them κατὰ μόνους ἐπὶ τῆς ἐρημίας, to lead a solitary Life in the Wilderness, forming their Minds, as in a *Monastery*, far from those who had corrupted them. And he destroy'd there all the elder Sort, that none might

enter into *Palæstine*, but they who had not seen the superstitious Impieties of the *Egyptians*, καὶ μηδὲνα διδάσκαλον ἔχειν τῆς τοσαύτης πονηρίας, and that they might have no Master left among them, to teach them such kind of Wickedness.

And all the Days of the Elders that outlived Joshua, and which had seen all the Works of the LORD that he had done for Israel.] These Elders had been chosen by *Moses*, who knew them to be Men of great Piety; that had not only seen, but observ'd and kept in Mind all God's wonderful Works; and would put others in mind of them, and teach them to serve and obey the LORD.

From this Place the *Jews* labour to establish all their Oral Traditions; which *Moses*, say they, deliver'd to *Joshua*, and he to these Elders, and they to the Prophets, and they to others, (see *Maimonides* in *Seder Zeraim*, set forth by our most learned Dr. *Pocock*, p. 34.) for which there is no Foundation.

Ver. 32. *And the Bones of Joseph, which the Children of Israel brought out of Egypt.]* It is a needless Pains which the *Jews* bestow, in reconciling this Place with *Exod.* xiii. 19. where it is said, *Moses took the Bones of Joseph with him*. For there is no Contradiction between these two Places, the Children of *Israel* doing what *Moses* required them to do; who could not carry them away himself, but saw them brought out of *Egypt*. Yet thus they gravely discourse about this Matter in the *Talmud*. *Tit. Sota*, Cap. i. Sect. 47. *When any one begins a Thing, but doth not bring it to Perfection, and another comes and finishes it, the Scripture speaks of him who compleats it, as if he alone had done it.*

Buried they in Shechem.] Which was one Reason, perhaps, for gathering the great Assembly above-mentioned, that they might the more solemnly deposite the Bones of this great Man, in that Portion of Land which his Father *Jacob* had given him, (see *Gen.* xlviii. 22.) where it seems they thought it most agreeable to lay him, rather than in the Cave of *Machpelah*. It may be reasonably thought also, that the Bodies of the rest of the Sons of *Jacob*, from whom the Twelve Tribes descended, were brought into *Canaan*, to be there interr'd, as *Josephus* relates from ancient Tradition, L. 2. *Antiq.* Cap. 4. And *St. Stephen* confirms it, *Acts* vii. 16. For tho' *Joseph* excell'd them all in Dignity, and gave this special Charge about his Body, yet no doubt every Tribe had as great a Regard to the Head of it, and would be inclined to do the same for their Fathers, that *Joseph* desired for himself. But whether they bury'd them in the Sepulchre at *Machpelah*, or in some eminent Place in their own Tribe, as *Joseph* was, there is none that gives us any Account.

In a Parcel of Ground which Jacob bought of the Sons of Hamor, the Father of Shechem, for an Hundred Pieces of Silver.] See *Gen.* xxxiii. 18, 19. This shews they did not bury him in the City of *Shechem*, but in a Field near it which was his own Ground: For so the ancient Manner was, not to bury in Cities and Towns, but in the adjacent Fields or Gardens.

And it became the Inheritance of the Children of Joseph.] Of the *Ephraimites*, who gave *Shechem*

them to the Levites, for a City of Refuge, xxi. 20, 21.

Ver. 33. *And Eleazar the Son of Aaron died.*] Who imitated *Joshua*, (if we may believe the *Samaritan Chronicle*) in calling all the Elders and Princes of the Tribes to him before he died, charging them strictly to obey all the Commands of God. After which he put off his sacred Garments, and cloathed his Son *Phineas* with them. This is so far from being improbable, that it is likely all the Elders did the same as far as their Authority could reach; being very desirous their Posterity might continue firm and stedfast in the Worship of God alone.

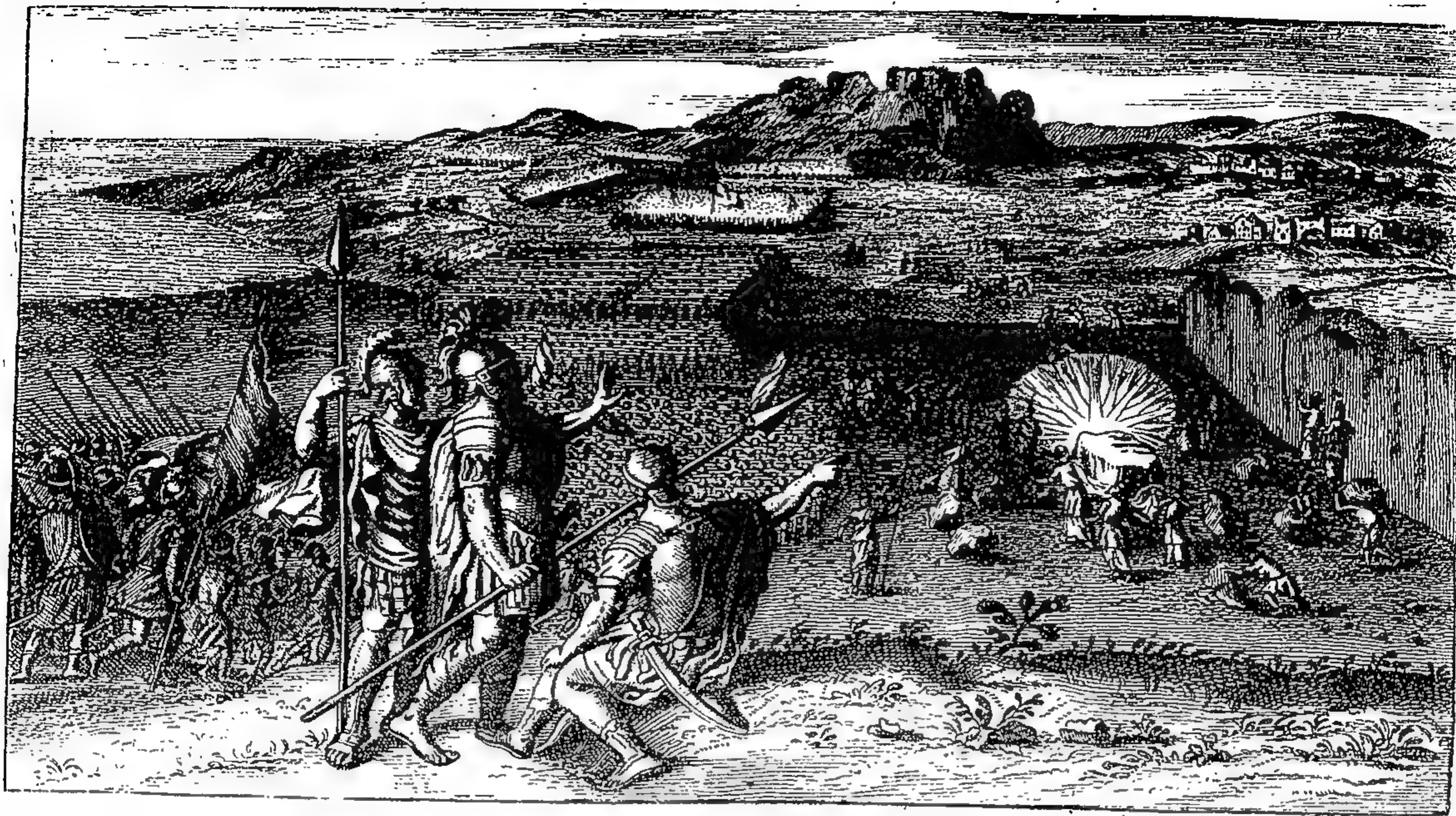
And they buried him in an Hill that pertained to Phineas his Son.] In the Hebrew the Words are, *in the Hill of Phineas*; that is, a Hill called by his Name. It being the Manner, as I have noted elsewhere, to call Places by the Name of their eldest Son.

Which was given him in Mount Ephraim.] It is a Question to whom this Hill was given: Most probable to *Eleazar*, who being the High Priest at the Time of the Division of the Land, they thought fit to give him a peculiar Portion, distinct from all the Cities of the Priests; none of which were in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, but all in the Tribes of *Judah*, *Benjamin*, and *Simeon*, as we read xxi. 9, 17, 19. And they gave it *Eleazar* in this Country, that he might be near to the Tabernacle, (which was in *Shiloh*) and near to *Joshua*, to be ready on all Occasions to advise him, and consult the Oracle for him.

But against this there lies a great Objection, that no Levite or Priest was to have any Portion in the Division of the Land: And therefore it is the most received Opinion among the *Jews*, that either *Eleazar* or *Phineas* had this Inheritance in the Right of his Wife. So the *Gemara Babylonica* on *Bava Bathra*, and a great many others, mentioned by Mr. *Selden* in his Book *de Successionibus ad Leges Hebr.* Cap. 18. where he observes another Example of this *Marital Succession*, as he calls it; that is, the Husband succeeding his Wife in her Estate after her Death, in 1 *Chron.* ii. 21. where the twenty-three Cities which *Jair* possess'd, *Kimchi* saith he had by his Wife.

These five last Verses, it is evident, were not written by *Joshua*: But this is no Argument he did not write this Book; no more than that *Moses* did not write the *Pentateuch*, because there is the like Account given of his Death and Burial in the Conclusion of it, by some other Author. See *Deut.* xxxiv. 1. The *Talmudists*, I observed, say, in *Bava Bathra*, that *Joshua* wrote his own Book, and the eight last Verses of the *Pentateuch*. And they say in the same Place, (Cap. 1.) as to what is written here, ver. 29. it was done by *Eleazar*; and what is said, ver. 33. it was wrote by *Phineas*: Or rather, these five Verses from 29. to the End, were written by *Samuel*, who being a Prophet, was moved and directed by God to continue the History of this People from the Death of *Joshua*, to his own Time.



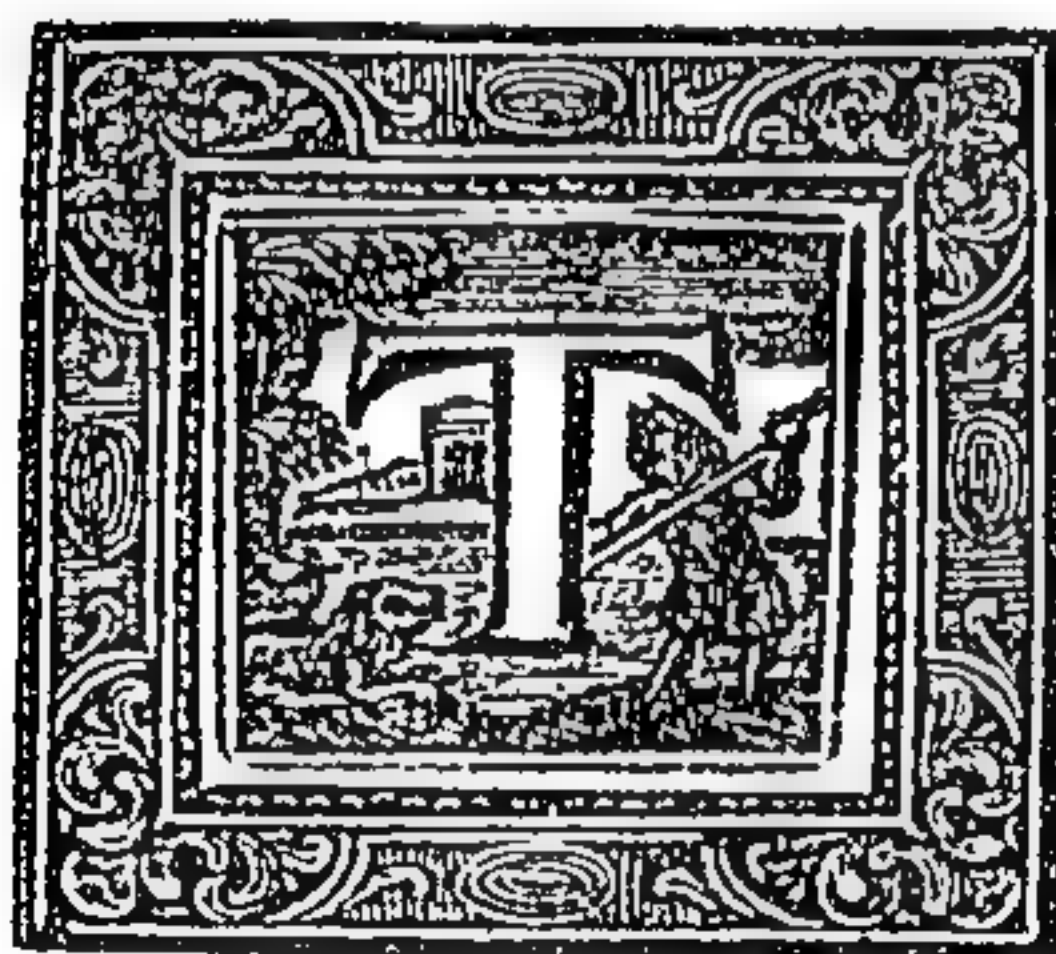


A

C O M M E N T A R Y

U P O N T H E

Book of *J U D G E S*.



HIS Book is called by the Name of *SHOPHE-TIM*, or *JUDGES*, because it treats principally of the great Things done by those illustrious Persons, who were raised up by God, upon special Occasions, after the Death of

Joshua, till the Time of making a King, to *Judge*, that is, to Rule, the People of *Israel* and to deliver them from their Oppressions. It consists of two Parts, the one containing the History of the *Judges*, from *Othniel* to *Samson*, which Ends with the 16th Chapter, (the History of the two last *Judges*, *Eli* and *Samuel*, being not recorded here; but in the following Book.) The other containing several memorable Actions, which were performed in or about the Time of the *Judges*; with which the Holy Writer would not interrupt their History, but reserved them to be related by themselves in the Conclusion, *viz.* in the 17th, and the following Chapters, unto the End of the Book.

It is but conjectur'd who was the Writer of it. Some think *Ezra*; but it is more probable

the Prophet *Samuel*, who was the last of the *Judges*; and, by the Direction of God, brought down their History unto his own Days, when they desired a King to be set over them. The *Talmudists* in *Bava Bathra* (Cap. 1.) are of this Opinion; which *Kimchi*, *Abarbinel*, and other great Authors follow. And indeed there is reason to think, that he who wrote the Conclusion of the Book of *Joshua*, was the Writer of this Book also; in the Second Chapter of which he inserts Part of that which is written there. And it is manifest it was written before the second Book of *Samuel*; where mention is made of a Passage in this Book; which would not have been so commonly known, if it had not been published here, 2 *Sam.* xi. 21. out of *Judg.* xi. 53. *David* also, in *Psal.* lxxviii. 7, 8, seems to allude unto what we read in the Song of *Deborah*, v. 4. See *Du Pin*. Certain it is, it was written before *David's* Reign; for the *Jebusites* were possessed of *Jerusalem* when this Author lived, (*ver.* 21. of the first Chapter) who were driven out of it by *David*, 2 *Sam.* v. 6. and therefore this Book was written before that; and is of wonderful use, as *Procopius Gazæus* observes, to represent unto us the mighty Power

of true Religion to make a Nation happy ; and the dismal Calamities which Impiety brings upon it. And therefore, saith he, *St. Paul* thought fit to propound a great many Examples to us out of this very Book ; such as *Gideon*, and *Barak*, and *Samson*, and *Jephthah*, who did marvellous Things by the Power of Faith.

C H A P. I.

Ver. 1. **N**OW after the Death of *Joshua*.] And of *Eleazar*, it is probable, (for this Book gives an Account of what follow'd after those Things that are mention'd in the foregoing) but how long after cannot be certainly determin'd : But we have reason to think, it was not till they were multiply'd so much, as to be able to people more of the Country than they had yet in Possession.

It came to pass that the Children of Israel.] There was no Person appointed by *Joshua* to succeed him in the Government, as he was appointed by *Moses* to be his Successor ; but the Government was left in the Hand of the Elders. For it is a mere Fiction which we meet withal in the *Samaritan Chronicle*, that at the last Assembly (mentioned *Joshua* xxiv.) he chose Twelve of the chief of the Tribes, and cast Lots which of them should hold his Place when he died ; and that the Lot fell upon one whose Name was *Abel*, and his Nephew ; to whom he assign'd his Authority, and set a Crown upon his Head. See *Hottinger* in his *Smegma Orientale*, Cap. 8. P. 522.

Asked the LORD, saying.] Enquired of him by *Urim* and *Thummim*, as the Manner was in all Cases that concern'd the whole Congregation of *Israel*. For which End, it is to be supposed, that some who represented the Body of the People (their *Elders*, perhaps, or *Heads* of their Tribes) were sent to *Shiloh*, where the Sanctuary was, and desired *Phineas* the High Priest to represent their Case to God, and beseech his Directions. Here the *Jews* raise a Question, Why we never read that *Joshua*, in all his Wars, consulted God by the Oracle, but the Elders immediately after his Death did ? To this they give several Answers. See *Numb.* xxvii. 21.

Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first to fight against them ?] They being increas'd, as I said, to such a Number, that they were able to people more of the Country ; and beginning to be straitned for want of Room, thought of enlarging their Possessions ; but would not adventure without God's Approbation and Direction to do any thing : And therefore desired he would tell them who should make the first Attempt ; that the rest, being encouraged by their Success, (of which they did not doubt, if they had his Warrant for what they did) might make the like. For it is evident by these Words, *go up for us*, that all the Tribes on this side *Jordan* were concern'd in this Matter.

Ver. 2. *And the LORD said, Judab.*] i. e. The Tribe of *Judab*, who were very populous, and no less valiant.

Shall go up.] And assault the mountainous

Country, which was the Lot of this Tribe. According to the Prophecy of *Jacob*, *Gen.* xlix. 8. where, comparing *Judab* to a Lyon's Whelp, he saith, From the Prey, my Son, thou art gone up.

Behold, I have delivered the Land into his Hand.] That is, all the Land belonging to their Lot. By this it seems plain, that the Answer by *Urim* and *Thummim* was given by a Voice which utter'd these Words. Here *Abarbinel* endeavours to give Satisfaction to the Question before mention'd, why *Joshua* did not enquire in this Manner, tho' it be expressly said, *Numb.* xxvii. 21. that *he shall stand before Eleazar the Priest, and ask Counsel of the LORD ; after the Judgment of Urim.* He thinks he did so, all the Time after that, till *Moses's* Death, to shew he was made the Leader of God's People for none but such could enquire by *Urim* : But after his Death, he was endued with the Spirit of Prophecy, as *Moses* was, and so had no need to enquire in that Manner, being immediately directed by God in his Proceedings. But after his Death, there being none endued with the Prophetical Spirit, the Children of *Israel* were constrain'd to have resort to this Oracle. Which is an Account very much below the Judgment of so great a Man ; for *Moses*, being a Prophet, did frequently ask Counsel of God at the Sanctuary, which was the same as if he had enquired by *Urim*. Therefore the true Answer is, that *Joshua* did thus enquire of the LORD in the Case of *Achan* ; and it is highly probable he did the same in the Management of his War, and other great Occasions, tho' it be not expressly mention'd in so many Words.

Ver. 3. *And Judab said to Simeon his Brother.*] They were Brethren by the same Father and Mother ; and also nearly join'd in their Situation, the Lot of the Tribe of *Simeon* being taken out of that of *Judab*, *Josh.* xix. 9.

Come up with me into my Lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites.] Which People, with the *Perizzites*, (as is further declared in the next Verse) still possessed a considerable Part of the which fell to *Judab*.

And I likewise will go with thee into thy Lot.] To drive them out of that Part of the Country which was the Portion of *Simeon*.

So Simeon went with him.] They join'd their Forces together in this Expedition, under the Conduct, no doubt, of some eminent Leader. And who so fit as *Caleb* ? who, tho' an old Man, was full of Vigour, and fit for War, (as he himself declared not long ago, *Josh.* xiv. 10, 11.) and had not yet got Possession (as appears by the Sequel) of the Portion which by God's Commandment was assigned him.

Ver. 4. *And Judab went up.*] They were the principal Persons concern'd in this Expedition, and therefore only mention'd tho' the Children of *Simeon* also went up with them.

And the LORD delivered.] We meet with no such Religious Expression (which occurs often here in these Holy Books) in any Heathen Writer.

The Canaanites and Perizzites into their Hand.] Tho' most of the People properly called *Canaanites*

naanites dwelt by the *Mediterranean* Sea, yet many of them were scatter'd up and down in other Parts of the Country, (as I observ'd upon *Numb. xiv. ult.*) and particularly in these Mountains and woody Places, where the *Perrizzites* dwelt. See *Josh. xvii. 15, 16.*

And they slew of them in Bezek ten thousand Men.] In the Country near to *Bezek*, which was a City in the Tribe of *Judah*, not far, some think, from *Bethlehem*. Here they chose to make their Rendezvous (as we now speak) of their Forces, and wait to receive the Children of *Judah*, that if they were worsted, they might easily find a strong Place of Retreat.

Ver. 5. And they found Adonibezek in Bezek.] He was the King, or Lord of this Place, as his Name imports, whom they surprized, as the Word *found* signifies, (see *Bochart Hieroz. P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 21.*) by a sudden Assault upon this City, whither he seems to have fled, when he had lost the Field. *Theodoret* makes this King the same with *Adonizedek* (mention'd in *Josh. x.*) but as their Names are different, so he was King of *Jerusalem*, and this of *Bezek*; where he was overcome; but the former in *Gibeon*, who was killed also with the Sword, and then hanged on a Tree; but this had only his Thumbs and Toes cut off, and so brought to *Jerusalem*, where he died.

And they fought against him.] Took the City wherein he thought to have defended himself, and the Remainder of his Army, which escaped hither.

And they slew the Canaanites and Perizzites.] Put all the People of those two Nations, whom they found there, to the Sword.

Ver. 6. But Adonibezek fled.] He made his Escape.

And they pursued him, and caught him.] They found which Way he went, and pursued him so close, that they overtook him before he could get to the strong Fortrefs of the *Jebusites*; where, it is likely, he hoped to secure himself.

And cut off his Thumbs and his great Toes.] That he might be made incapable of War hereafter, being unable to handle Arms, by reason of the Loss of his Thumbs; or to run swiftly (which was a noble Quality in a Warrior) by the Loss of his great Toes. This had been his own Practice, it appears by his Confession in the next verse, which made them think it reasonable to serve him in his kind.

Ver. 7. And Adonibezek said, Threescore and ten Kings.] In those Days the chief Person in every City had a Kingly Power; as we learn from the History of *Joshua*, who found many Kings in *Canaan* when he conquer'd it. And *Seventy* such petty Princes *Adonibezek* had subdued; who were not Kings of so many several Cities, but some of them, it is likely, Kings of the same Place, who successively opposed him, and were dethroned by him.

Having their Thumbs and great Toes cut off, gathered their Meat under my Table.] He was proud and insolent, as well as cruel, treating those Kings whom he conquer'd, as if they had been Dogs.

As I have done, so hath God requited me.]

VOL. II.

Justice was defined by the *Pythagoreans* to be τὸ ἀντιπεπονθός, to make others feel the Hurt they had done, by their suffering the like Punishment. Which *Harmenopulus* calls ταύτοπαθία, suffering the very same; as *Grotius* notes, *Lib. 2. de Jure Belli & Pacis, C. 20. N. 32.* Now, *Adonibezek's* Acknowledgment of God's Justice in this Punishment, hath made some think he was a Penitent, and became a Convert to the true Religion: For he speaks of God in the singular Number, and not of the Gods, as the Heathen Manner was; which might possibly be the reason why they spared his Life, and did not kill him. Certain it is, his Pride and Arrogance was very much humbled by his Punishment, which extorted this Confession from him. For it carry'd in it (as *Mr. Mede* observes on these Words) the very Stamp and Print of the Sin for which it was inflicted.

And they brought him to Jerusalem.] Which, as it follows in the next Verse, was now in the Possession of the Children of *Judah*: Tho' the *Jews* think they had not yet taken the City; but having begirt it, they brought him Prisoner thither, and he died in the time of the Siege.

And there he died.] After he had lived some time, perhaps, to perfect his Repentance.

Ver. 8. Now the Children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem, and taken it.] We do not read of its being taken by *Joshua*, though it seems to me highly probable, that when he took the King of *Jerusalem*, he also took his City, and did to it as he did to the rest of the Cities of those Kings, mentioned *Josh. x. 3, 23.* But when he was gone to conquer other Parts of the Country, it is likely the old Inhabitants returned again, and took Possession of it: For the Land was not then divided among the *Israelites*: After which, this City falling in Part to the Share of *Judah*, they dispossessed the *Jebusites*, that dwelt there, of all but the strong Fortrefs on the Top of Mount *Sion*, which held out till the Days of *David*. See upon *Josh. x. 1. and xv. 63.*

And burnt it with Fire.] As *Joshua* had done to *Jericho*, *Ai*, and *Hazor*: This being a City, it is probable, deeply infected with Idolatry; from which they thought fit entirely to purge it, before they rebuilt it.

Ver. 9. Afterward the Children of Judah went down.] From *Jerusalem* (I suppose) which stood high.

To fight against the Canaanites that dwelt in the Mountain.] There were several Mountains round about *Jerusalem*, (*Psal. cxxv. 2.*) and we often read of the Mountains of *Judah*, which were possessed, it seems, by the old Inhabitants, till after the Death of *Joshua*.

And the South.] Towards the Wilderness of *Paran*.

And the Valley.] Or the flat Country about those Mountains, some of which are mentioned in the following Verses.

Ver. 10. And Judah went up against the Canaanites that dwelt in Hebron.] This shews the old Inhabitants of the Country had returned to this Place, after it had been destroy'd by

M 2

Joshua,

Joshua, as we read it was *Josh. x. 36, 37.* Who were now again expelled by the Children of *Judab* after his Death, this City being in their Lot.

Now the Name of *Hebron* before time was *Kirjath-Arba.*] As much as to say, the City of *Arba*, who was the Father of *Anak*, See *Josh. xiv. ult. xv. 13.*

And they slew *Sheshai, Abiman, and Talmi.*] These were the three Sons of *Anak*, as we read there, *Josh. xv. 14.* where it is said that *Caleb* drove them out from thence: For he was the Conductor of the Children of *Israel* in this Expedition, (as I observed upon *ver. 3.*) and had great Reason to go up against this City, because this Part of the Country was given to him by a particular Direction of God, *Josh. xiv. 13, 14. xv. 13.* But he did not conquer it till after the Death of *Joshua*, as this Place shews us.

Ver. 11. And from thence he went against the Inhabitants of Debir, &c.] Another City which had been taken by *Joshua* in the Beginning of the War; (*Josh. x. 38, 39.*) but while he was gone to bring under other Parts of the Country, was re-inhabited by the *Canaanites*, who were not expelled till after *Joshua's* Death: When *Caleb* (to whom it was given, together with *Hebron*, for his Portion, *Josh. xv. 15.*) drove them out again, and possessed himself of it.

Ver. 12. And Caleb said.] Hence it still appears, that the Children of *Judab* fought under the Conduct of *Caleb*, as their General.

He that smiteth *Kirjath-Sepher*, and taketh it, to him will I give *Achsah* my Daughter to Wife.] This and the three following Verses, 13, 14, 15. have been explain'd upon *Josh. xv. 16, &c.* Where the Portion of *Judab* being described, there is a particular Mention of what was given to *Caleb*, and how he disposed of it. Which Relation seems to have been taken out of this Book, and inserted there, by the Authority of *Ezra*, for the fuller Illustration of all that belonged to that Tribe, whether by Lot or peculiar Donation before the Division of the Land. For any one may see that the Description of *Judab's* Lot is entirely coherent, (as *Huetius* truly observes) if all between the twelfth and the twentieth Verse were left out. And that all Things here mentioned were not done till after the Death of *Joshua*, is so evident by the Narration which is here made of all that fell out after that Time, as to leave no Doubt of it.

Ver. 16. And the Children of the Kenite, Moses his Father-in-law.] See *Numb. x. 29.* where *Hobab*, the Son of *Jethro*, was invited by *Moses* to accompany him into the Land of *Canaan*, and in all Probability accepted the Invitation, as I there observed.

Went up out of the City of *Palm-trees.*] That is, *Jericho*, which was in a flat Country. See *Deut. xxxiv. 3.* Here it seems they were pleased to settle themselves at their first coming into *Canaan*, where *Moses* promised, that whatsoever Goodness God should shew to the *Israelites*, they should have their Share in it: And there was no sweeter Place in that Country, than

this about *Jericho*; in the Territory of which they dwelt, for the City itself was destroyed.

With the Children of *Judab.*] Admiring the Courage and Success of this Tribe, they seem to have contracted a particular Friendship with them, and to have accompanied them in this Expedition into the high Country.

Into the Wilderness of *Judab*, which lieth in the South of *Arad.*] In the Southern Part of the Land of *Canaan*, where *Arad* was, *Numb. xxi. 1.* which, as *Procopius Gazæus* here observes, was a City of the *Amorites*, near to the Wilderness of *Kadesh*, which is *Paran*: In his Time it was a Village four Miles from *Malaathon*; but twenty from *Hebron*.

And dwelt among the People.] They removed from the City of *Palm-trees*, which was in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, and settled themselves among the People of *Judab*. Yet not all of them; for some went into the Northern Parts among the Tribe of *Naphtali*, as appears from *iv. 10, 11.* What should be the Reason of their forsaking so pleasant a Place, as that where they were first settled, is but conjectured. Some think it was the Love of Solitariness and Retirement; which they gather from *Jerem. xxxv. 6, &c.* Or, as I said, out of their great Affection to the Children of *Judab*; under whose Protection they hoped for greater Safety than in other Places.

Ver. 17. And Judab went with Simeon his Brother.] Having finished, as far as they were able, the Conquest of what belonged to the Tribe of *Judab*, they went to assist the *Simeonites*, according to their mutual Engagement, *ver. 3.*

And they slew the *Canaanites* that inhabited *Zephath*, and utterly destroyed it.] Some think this was the Name both of a City, and of a small Region; but whereabouts it was situated, is not known.

And the Name of the City was called *Hormah.*] From the utter Destruction before mentioned. Some think this was the same Place with that mentioned *Numb. xxi. 2, 3.* But there he speaks of more Cities that were laid waste; here but of one.

Ver. 18. And Judab took Gaza, with the Coast thereof; and Askelon, with the Coast thereof; and Ekron, with the Coast thereof.] These three Cities were in the Land of the *Philistines*, upon the Sea-Coast; which the *Israelites* did not hold long, before the *Philistines* recovered them again. For the *Israelites* contenting themselves with taking these Cities, without destroying the People, (as they did in other Places, and ought to have done here) and only making them Tributaries, it was not hard for them to regain their Liberty.

Ver. 19. And the LORD was with Judab.] The *Targum* here uses the same Language, which we find all along in the Book of *Joshua*, when he speaks of God's Presence with him (see *Josh. xiv. 12.*) and the WORD of the LORD helped the House of *Judab*.

And they drove out the Inhabitants of the Mountain.] God gave them such Success wheresoever they went, that it ought to have encouraged them to go on with their Enterprize; which

which they did not, as the following Words tell us. This Mountain, it is very likely, was *Mons Casius*, which was near to *Gaza*.

But could not drive out the Inhabitants of the Valley, because they had Chariots of Iron.] Here now the Fountain of all the ensuing Evils which befel the *Israelites*, begins to be opened. In that, either through Sloth, or Covetousness, or Distrust of God's Power, or more Lenity than the law of *Moses* allowed, they did not attempt those People that were stronger than ordinary; or, being unfaithful to God, failed in their Attempt; or, having some Success, only brought them under Tribute. And it is most likely, they were so affrighted at the Iron Chariots, (which were in use in the Plain Country, tho' not in the Mountains) that they were quite disheartened; and did not remember what God had promised them, (*ver. 2. of this Chapter*) and how undauntedly *Joshua* set upon those that came thus dreadfully appointed, *Josh. xi. 4, 6.* Concerning these Chariots, see *Josh. xvii. 16, 18.* where I have observed they are frequently mentioned in prophane Authors. And see *Dilherrus*, Tom. 1. *Disput. Academ. P. 129.*

Ver. 20. And they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moses said, and expelled thence the three Sons of Anak.] Thus ends the Account of the Wars of the Tribe of *Judab* which concludes with a Repetition of what Part in their Country was given to *Caleb*; because he was their Leader, (as I have often said) and this was his Reward, *viz.* the Country about *Hebron*; the City itself belonging to the *Levites*.

Ver. 21. And the Children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem.] This Tribe, and that of *Judab*, had an Interest in *Jerusalem*: But tho' both of them joined together, they could not drive the *Jebusites* out of the South Part of it, where they had a strong Fortrefs upon Mount *Sion*. See *Josh. xv. 63.* Nay of that Part of the City which belonged to *Judab*, they were not dispossessed till the forenamed Expedition.

But the Jebusites dwelt with the Children of Benjamin to this Day.] That is, they kept Possession of that Fortrefs, from which they were not able to drive them; but they dwelt there in the Days when *Samuel* wrote this Book, being not expelled till the Reign of *David*. And they seem also to have dwelt with the *Benjamites* in that Part of the City belonging to them; which tho' conquer'd, yet the Inhabitants were not destroy'd, but only brought under Tribute. For this was very agreeable to the lazy and covetous Humour which now began to prevail in *Israel*.

Ver. 22. And the House of Joseph.] Viz. The Tribe of Ephraim, Josh. xvi. 1.

They also went up against Beth-el.] They, following the Example of *Judab*, *Simeon*, and *Benjamin*, endeavoured to enlarge their Border by taking *Beth-el*.

And the LORD was with them.] As the Success demonstrated. The *Targum* hath it, (as before *ver. 19.*) *The WORD of the LORD was their Helper.*

Ver. 23. And the House of Joseph sent to decry Beth-el.] They proceeded very cautiously;

sending Spies (as we read in the next Verse) to view the Strength of the Place, and to discover how it might be best approached.

Now the Name of the City before was Luz.] See *Gen. xxviii. 19. Josh. xvi. 2.*

Ver. 24. And the Spies saw a Man come forth out of the City.] Whom they apprehended, as he passed by the Place where they lay to make their Observations, and get Intelligence.

And they said unto him, Shew us, we pray thee, the Entrance into the City.] Where it may be most easily entered. For they did not enquire the Way to the Gate, which was common and plain enough; but for the weakest Part, where the Walls were lowest, or most out of Repair, or had the least Guard. Or, they desired him, perhaps, to shew them some private Way to get into it, which none knew but the Inhabitants.

And we will shew thee Mercy.] As they spake civilly and gently to him when they apprehended him, so they make him a Promise of kind Usage, when they got into the City, by sparing his Life, and all belonging to him, as they did *Rabab* and her Family: Which, it is highly probable, he begg'd of them, being fallen into their Hands; and it was not unlawful for them to grant, if he changed his Religion, or left the Country, as we find he afterwards did.

Ver. 25. And when he shewed them the Entrance into the City.] Notice, I suppose, was immediately sent to the Army, which lay not far off.

They smote the City with the Edge of the Sword.] Came upon them on a sudden, and assaulted them where they least expected it; so that they found little Resistance.

But they let go the Man, and all his Family.] Did them no Harm; but gave them their Liberty, as well as Lives, to go whither they pleased.

Ver. 26. And the Man went into the Land of the Hittites.] A Colony of this Nation, I suppose, had planted themselves heretofore in some of the neighbouring Countries, *Syria* or *Arabia*, or some of those that fled upon *Joshua's* invading the Land, settled themselves there. To whom this Man thought good to go with his Family, being perhaps of the same Nation.

And built a City.] Which is an Argument, that the Children of *Ephraim* were so kind as to dismiss him and his Family, with all their Goods and Estate.

And called the Name of it Luz.] To preserve the Memory of the Place from whence he came. The Founders of Cities are mentioned with Honour by all Authors; and this seems to be so intended.

Which is the Name thereof unto this Day.] It kept this Name to the Time of the Writing of this Book, and long after. For it seems to be the same City mentioned by *Josephus* in *Arabia*, (not far from *Judæa*) which he calls *Λύσσα*. *L. 14. Antiq. Cap. 2.* And *Bochartus* observes, that this Place had its Name originally from the great Plenty of Almonds growing there; from whence also it may be *Lusitania* had its Name, *Lib. 1. Canaan, Cap. 35.*

Ver. 27 *Neither did Manasseb.*] He speaks of that Part of this Tribe which was seated on this side Jordan.

Drive out the Inhabitants of Beth-shean and her Towns, &c.] Hitherto several of the *Israelites* had shewed some Valour, and expelled some of the *Canaanites*. But now he begins to shew how cowardly others of them were; for these do not seem to have attempted any thing against the Places here mentioned, or any where else. *Beth-shean* was a City not far from Jordan. See *Josh. xvii. 11.* where the rest of the Cities here named in this Verse are mentioned.

But the Canaanites would dwell in that Land.] Not only in the Cities, where they might have been freighted and kept under, but in the Towns and Villages, where they had the same Liberties with the *Israelites*, and perhaps held some of the Ground belonging to them. For so some think the Word *dwell* signifies; that they enjoyed all the Benefits that any others had. And this they demanded as their Right; which the *Hebrew* Word *Jaal* imports; a settled Resolution not to quit that Land. See *Josh. xvii. 12.*

Ver. 28. *And it came to pass, when the Israelites were strong, that they put the Canaanites to Tribute, and did not utterly drive them out.*] Herein they acted contrary to the Law, whereby they were enjoined to destroy them, when they were able. And being strong enough to make them Tributaries, they might, no doubt, have utterly expelled them out of the Land. But they found more Profit in making them pay Tribute; and it cost them less Pains to bring them into some Subjection, than to destroy them. And this seems to be here noted, as the common Fault of all the Children of *Israel*, that when they grew strong, they did not use their Power to destroy or expel the *Canaanites*: but let them live quietly under them, upon Payment of Tribute.

Ver. 29. *Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer.*] *Josh. xvi. 10.* It is very probable, they did not so much as exact a Tribute from them, (which is not here mentioned) but made a Covenant of Friendship with them; which was still an higher Crime. And this the next Words seem to import.

But the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them.] Which is a Form of Speech not used in the foregoing Exceptions. And to dwell among a People, signifies a quiet Settlement, with the Enjoyment of all their Rights. As in *2 Kings iv. 13.* when *Elisha* offered the *Shunamite* to do her any Kindness at Court, she expresses herself satisfied with her Condition, in these Words, *I dwell among my own People.*

Ver. 30. *Neither did Zebulun drive out the Inhabitants of Kitron, nor the Inhabitants of Nahalol.*] Which was the greater Crime, because this last City was ἀφωρισμένη Λευίταις, one of those that were separated for the *Levites*, as *Eusebius* speaks. See *Josh. xxi. 35.* Yet they did more than the *Ephraimites*; for tho' they let them dwell among them, they made them pay Tribute.

But the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became Tributaries.] They troubled themselves no

further than to make them pay a Tribute to them; when they might, with a little more Pains, have expelled them. This Laziness, or Covetousness, or whatsoever it was that made them act in this Manner, brought them into a dangerous Snare.

Ver. 31. *Neither did Asher drive out the Inhabitants of Accbo.*] A city near the *Mediterranean* Sea, called by *Strabo* and others *Ace*; and afterward *Ptolemais*, as *Eusebius* saith, who observes, that the *Asherites* did not drive out the ἀλλοφύμους from hence. *Procopius* saith the same.

Nor the Inhabitants of Sidon.] Which every one knows was another great City upon the same Sea.

Nor of Ablab, nor of Achzib.] We find no Mention of the former of these elsewhere; but the latter is in *Josh. xix. 29.* and was called in After-times *Ecdippa*, as *Eusebius* relates.

Nor Helbath, nor Apbik, nor of Rehob.] The two latter of these we read of in *Josh. xix. 28, 30.* but nothing of the former, unless it be the same with *Helkath*, mentioned there, *ver. 25.*

Ver. 32. *But the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the Inhabitants of the Land; for they did not drive them out.*] They seem to have entered into a League of Friendship with the *Canaanites*; so that they were mixed with them as if they had been the same Nation, which was most strictly forbidden by the Law of *Moses*: For they did not so much as make them Tributaries; but the *Asherites* seem to have submitted to the basest Condition of all the other Tribes: For it is not said, as of the other Tribes, that the People dwelt among the *Asherites*; but that the *Asherites* dwelt among them. As if the *Canaanites* remained still the Lords of that Country, and the *Asherites* were only permitted to live among them.

Ver. 33. *Neither did Naphtali drive out the Inhabitants of Beth-sheMesh, nor the Inhabitants of Beth-anath.*] Both these Cities are mentioned as in the Lot of *Naphtali*, *Josh. xix. 38.*

But they dwelt among the Canaanites, the Inhabitants of the Land.] Imitating the *Asherites*, in letting the old Inhabitants live promiscuously with them; or rather contenting themselves with the Liberty to live quietly among the *Canaanites*.

Nevertheless, the Inhabitants of Beth-sheMesh, and Beth-anath, became Tributaries to them.] In this they were more valiant than the *Asherites*, that they brought these two Cities under Contribution, and made them acknowledge them for their Lords.

Ver. 34. *And the Amorites forced the Children of Dan into the Mountain.*] The Condition of the *Danites* was the worst of all the Tribes: For they could neither expel the old Inhabitants of their Country, nor make them Tributaries, nor so much as possess it together with them: But the *Amorites* distressed them sorely, by penning them up in the Cities that were in the mountainous Parts of their Country, not suffering them to dwell below in the Plain.

For they would not suffer them to come down into the Valley.] Being very strong, it is likely, in Chariots of Iron, (which were of use, I observed,

observed in the flat Country, tho' they could do no Service in the Mountains) which the *Danites* so dreaded, that they durst not venture to encounter them.

Ver. 35. *But the Amorites would dwell in Mount Heres, in Aijalon, and Shaalbim.*] And to add to their Affliction, would not let them enjoy all the mountainous Country, but possessed these three Cities there: Which constrained the *Danites* to seek for larger Quarters in other Parts; and seems to have been the Occasion of that Expedition mentioned *Josh. xix. 47.* where, *ver. 41.* we read of the two last mentioned Cities. See my Notes there.

Yet the Hand of the House of Joseph.] That is, the *Ephraimites*, who were next Neighbours to the *Danites*, in one Part of their Country.

Prevailed.] Against the *Amorites*, as the LXX expound it, ἡ ἐξουσία ἡ χειρὸς οἴκου Ἰωσήφ ἐπὶ τῷ Ἀμορραῖον, *The Hand of the House of Joseph was heavy upon the Amorite*; for they came to the Assistance of their Brethren, when they were grievously distressed.

So that they became Tributaries.] They brought the *Amorites* so much under, that they made those three Cities before mentioned pay Tribute to the *Danites*, if not all the low Countries which they inhabited; for he saith in general, *They became Tributaries*, speaking of all the *Amorites* thereabouts.

Ver. 36. *And the Coast of the Amorites, was from the going up to Akrabbim, from the Rock, and upward.*] We find mention of the going up to *Akrabbim* in *Josh. xv. 3.* See my Notes there. And the *Vulgar* by the *Rock* (in *Hebrew*, *Selab*) understand the City called *Petra*, which was upon the Borders of *Edom*, and by *Amaziah* called *Jockteel*, in *2 Kings xiv. 7.* Some take these Words to signify the large Extent of the Country which the *Amorites* inhabited; but I take them rather to denote, that the Children of *Ephraim* gave such a Check to their Insolence, that they were confined to this Country, which reached from *Akrabbim* and *Selab*, to the Mountains here mentioned. By this it appears, the *Israelites* let so many of the old Inhabitants remain in *Canaan*, that they settled themselves among them; insomuch, that in the Days of *Solomon*, we read of a Remnant of the *Amorites*, *Hittites*, *Perizzites*, *Hivites*, and *Jebusites*, *1 Kings ix. 20, 21.* and in far latter Ages, as I have often observed, the *Gergesens* remained in the Days of our Saviour, *Math. viii. 28.* tho' it is likely they were all become Profelytes so far as to worship the God of *Israel*, tho' not entirely of their Religion.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. **A**ND an Angel of the LORD.] The Jews by an *Angel* here understand a Prophet, who was sent by God as his Messenger; which the word *Angel* imports: And they commonly take it to have been *Phineas*, who was employed on this Message. But I see no Reason to depart from the natural Signification of the Word, when there is no Absurdity in it, and it is not usual to speak in this

Metaphorical Style: For there can no Instance be given, that I remember, of a Prophet, called an *Angel of the LORD*; which I take to signify more than an Angel, which appeared from Heaven on this Occasion; that is, the *Angel of the Covenant*.

Came up from Gilgal.] Angels are not commonly said to come up, but to come down; which is one Reason, I suppose, why this Angel hath been taken for a Prophet. But if we consider whence he was seen to come, and why from *Gilgal*, this Phrase will appear to be most proper; of which I shall give an Account presently.

To Bochim.] This was not the Name of the Place before, but was given it on this Occasion, *ver. 5.* In all Probability it was *Shiloh*; for there was no other Place where all the People of *Israel* were wont to assemble, as they were now when this Angel appeared to them, *ver. 4.*

And said, I made you to go out of Egypt.] These Words evidently shew, this was not a created Angel, but an uncreated; even that very Person who appeared to *Joshua* hard-by *Jericho*, *Josh. v. 13, 14.* which I have shewn there was God himself: For who but God could speak in this Style, *I made you to go out of Egypt*? No Prophet, nor any created Angel, durst have been so bold; but would have prefaced to this Speech in some such Words as these, *Thus saith the LORD, I have made you to go, &c.* Supposing then this Angel to be the same with him that then appeared, it was fit for him to appear now as coming from *Gilgal*, to put them in mind of that illustrious Appearance of God near that Place, and the Assurance he then gave them of his Presence with them in the Conquest of the Land, and the solemn Covenant they made with him, by the renewing of Circumcision in that Place: Which upbraided them with their base Ingratitude to God, and their Sloth in not endeavouring to expel the *Canaanites*.

And have brought you into the Land which I swore to your Fathers.] Of which he had given them Possession.

And I said, I will never break my covenant with you.] If they proved not false to him, he assured them they should always find him present with them, to make good his Promises to them. This *Joshua* told them they knew very well, that not one good Thing had failed which he promised; and bad them be confident he would still continue the same faithful God. See *Josh. xxi. 45. xxiii. 14.*

Ver. 2. *And ye shall make no League with the Inhabitants of this Land.*] Or rather, but ye shall make no League, &c. For this was the Condition of the Covenant on their part, *Deut. vii. 2.* and long before that, *Exod. xxiii. 32. xxxiv. 12.* and again more lately, *Josh. xxiii. 12.*

Ye shall throw down their Altars.] *Exod. xxxiv. 13. Deut. vii. 5. xii. 3.*

But ye have not obeyed my Voice, Why have you done this?] That is, you can give no Account of your Disobedience, to such plain, and exprefs, and repeated Commands.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you.*] God therefore resolved to make good the Threatnings pronounced in his Covenant; as hitherto he had performed his Promise. See *Josh. xxiii. 13.*

But they shall be Thorns in your Sides.] To vex and gall them, as *Joshua* there told them.

And their Gods shall be a snare unto you.] As *Moses* had foretold them, *Exod. xxiii. 33. xxxiv. 12.* For they were taken, by their Conversation with Idolaters, as Beasts are in a Toil; and drawn to the Worship of their Gods, which was their Ruin.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass, when the Angel of the LORD spake all these Words unto all the Children of Israel.*] By this it appears they were all met at some solemn Festival, as they were bound to do three times every Year, (for otherwise it cannot be conceived what should occasion such an Assembly of the whole Congregation) and consequently, the Place where the Words were spoken to them, was *Shiloh*.

That the People lift up their Voice, and wept.] They made doleful Lamentations; some, it is likely, when they reflected on their Sin; others, when they thought of their Danger.

Ver. 5. *And they called the Name of that Place Bochim.*] Which signifies *Weepers*. It's possible the Place where the Angel, or where they stood, was called by this Name, in Memory of this great Goodness of God; which, for the present, mightily wrought upon their Hearts, as appears by what follows.

And they sacrificed there unto the LORD.] This shews it was the Place of publick Worship where they now were, and offered upon this Occasion whole Burnt-offerings unto God, by Way of Supplication and Prayer to him, with Thanksgiving for his Goodness in calling them to Repentance. Some think indeed, that they offered expiatory Sacrifices to make Atonement for their Sin: But they would not have been called simply *Sacrifices*, which commonly are meant of whole Burnt-offerings, or Peace-offerings, by which they acknowledged him to be the LORD, and promised to serve no other God.

Ver. 6. *And when Joshua had let the People go.*] Or, now when *Joshua* had broke up that last great Assembly which he held before his Death, *xxiv. 28*; so some expound it. But the next Words seem to direct us rather to understand it of his Dismission of them, after he had cast Lots, and divided the Land among them, *Josh. xix. 15. xxi. 43.*

The Children of Israel went every Man unto his Inheritance, to possess the Land.] To take Possession of that Land which fell to their Share, and settle themselves in it. And they went with a Resolution, no doubt, to serve the LORD only; as, we cannot but think, he exhorted them before they parted: For the Lots were cast in *Shiloh* before the LORD, as we are often told in the Book of *Joshua*, *xviii. 6, 8, 10. xix. 51.* From whence they going to take Possession of their Lot, it is reasonable to think he did not dismiss them without his Blessing, and with a solemn Charge to observe the Laws of God, such as he gave to the two Tribes and

half, *xxii. 5, &c.* And this is the Reason why the Author of this Book repeats this out of the Book of *Joshua*, to shew when their Apostacy began, and how it came about: For tho' they went to their Possessions well disposed, yet their Love of the World, and Study of their own private Advantages, so increased, that they made them forget the publick Good, and take little Care of their Religion.

Ver. 7. *And the People served the LORD all the Days of Joshua.*] According to his Exhortation, and their solemn Promises a little before he died, *Josh. xxiv. 14, 15, 16, &c.*

And all the Days of the Elders that out-lived Joshua.] Such as *Eleazar*, and the rest mentioned, *Josh. xix. 51.* who were Men of great Authority, as well as Piety: and often, no doubt, admonished them of their Duty, and put them in Mind of their Promises made to *Joshua* in *Shechem*, where he made a Covenant between God and them, and wrote it in the Book of the Law of God, *xxiv. 25, 26, &c.*

Who had seen all the great Works of the LORD that he did for Israel.] Both among the *Egyptians*, and in the *Wilderness*, and in *Canaan*; which *Joshua* had represented to them as a Motive to fear the LORD, and serve him in Sincerity, *Josh. xxiv. 5, 6, &c. 14, 15.* Of these Things the *Elders*, we may reasonably suppose, frequently reminded them, and thereby kept them stedfast in their Religion. See *Josh. xxiv. 21.* For whatsoever bad Inclinations they had in them, they were restrained, by the Reverence they bare to these great Men, from breaking loose from God while they lived.

Ver. 8. *And Joshua the Son of Nun, the Servant of the LORD, died, &c.*] After he had made that excellent Speech to them before-mentioned, and engaged them in a solemn Covenant to be God's People. See *Josh. xxiv. 29.*

Ver. 9. *And they buried him in the Border of his Inheritance in Timnath-Heres, &c.*] This is mentioned only to shew that they honoured him after his Death, by attending his Funeral, as they had done in his Life. See *Josh. xxiv. 30.*

Ver. 10. *And also all that Generation were gathered unto their Fathers.*] I suppose he means, not only all those who had seen the Works of God in *Egypt*, and the *Wilderness*, but those also who had seen *Jordan* dried up, the Walls of *Jericho* fall down, and the Sun stand still at *Joshua's* Word, and their Enemies smitten down with Hailstones, &c. Which had made such Impressions on their Hearts, that they generally continued in the Service of God while they lived; and kept others in Obedience to him.

And there arose another Generation after them, which knew not the LORD.] But the next Generation did not regard the LORD, nor mind their Religion; but only studied to settle themselves, on any Terms, in their Possessions, by making Peace with the *Canaanites*, whom they should have driven out.

Nor yet the Works which he had done for Israel.] Which they did not keep in Mind, as they ought to have done; being wholly intent to their earthly Concerns, in building Houses, planting Vineyards, and improving their Lands.

Unto which they were invited by the Peace they enjoyed; by which Mens Minds are wont to be corrupted; as the *Greeks* and *Romans* were in future Ages. According to those known Words of the *Roman* Satyrift,

Nunc patimur longæ pacis mala.—

Ver. 11. *And the Children of Israel did Evil in the Sight of the LORD.*] By this Forgetfulness of God, and of his Works, and by their Familiarity with the People of *Canaan*, they soon learned to do as they did, and that openly and publickly, not fearing the dreadful Sentence of God against such Evil-Doers; who were most odious to him, whatsoever Excuses Men make for them. So that Phrase, *in the Sight of the LORD*, may be interpreted.

And served Baalim.] The Gods of the Nations whose Land they possessed, who were called by this general Name, which signifies Lords. For among the Heathen, as St. Paul observes, there were Gods many, and Lords many. In *Hebrew* he would have said many *Baalim*, who were their deified great Men, as Mr. Mede hath shewn. (P. 776. of his Works) For *Baal* (in *Chaldee*, *Bel*) the King of *Babel* next after *Nimrod*, was the first that was deified, and reputed a God after his Death; from whence they called all other Dæmons by the Name of *Baalim*; as from the first *Roman* Emperor who was called *Cæsar*, all that followed him were stiled *Cæsars*. *Baalim* therefore being the general Name of the Gods of *Syria*, *Palæstine*, and the neighbouring Countries, there was as many *Baals* as there were Nations: For Example, *Baal* of the *Sidonians*, and *Baal* of the *Amorites*, of the *Moabites*, and *Ammonites*, and the rest of the People thereabouts, who had their *Baalim*. See also *Selden*, *de Diis Syris*. Syntagm. 2. C. 1.

Ver. 12. *And they forsook the LORD God of their Fathers, which brought them out of the Land of Egypt, and followed other Gods of the People that were round about them.*] By other Gods may be meant the Gods of the People of *Canaan*; which did not content them, but they worshipped also the Gods of other neighbouring Nations; none of which had bestowed any Benefit upon them. This was a very high Aggravation of their Sin; that when all other Nations made to themselves such Gods as they thought had done them good, or could be helpful to them, they forsook the greatest Benefactor to their Nation, who had made them a free People, and worshipped such Gods as had done nothing for them, nor had been able to preserve those that worshipped them from Destruction.

And bowed themselves unto them.] They did not only own them for Gods, but publickly adored them.

And provoked the LORD to Anger.] Who had told them he was a jealous God, and could not bear any Rival, *Exod.* xx. 1, 2. It is not easy to give an Account what moved them to forsake their God, after such wonderful Things as he had done for them, and their most solemn Engagements to him. It is not unlikely that

one Reason was, the unusual Rites prescribed in his Divine Service, much different from all other Nations; and several Laws that made them unlike all the rest of the World, who hated them upon this Account. This they could not bear, desiring to be conformable to other People, and gain their Friendship. For *Hosea* saith, viii. 12. they looked upon the great Things of the Law as a strange Thing.

Ver. 13. *And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.*] Especially they worshipped the *Sun*, and the *Moon*, or *Venus*; which some understand by *Astarte*. In the next Chapter it is said they worshipped *Baalim* and the *Groves*, iii. 7. For in those Groves several Goddesses, under the Name of *Ashtaroth*, were worshipped, as Mr. *Selden* conjectures in his Syntag. 2. *de Diis Syris*, Cap. 2. where he shews there were many *Astartes* among the Heathen, as there were *Baals*; and therefore the Scripture speaks of them in the Plural Number, (as the LXX here doth τὰς Ἀστάρτας) because of the Multitude of Images representing *Juno*, or *Venus* or *Diana*, which had the Name of *Ashtaroth*, signifying (as some think) as much as *Beata's*, blessed.

Ver. 14. *And the Anger of the LORD was hot against Israel.*] Brake out in very dreadful Effects upon them.

And he delivered them into the Hands of the Spoilers that spoiled them.] Carried away their Cattle and their Goods.

And he sold them into the Hands of their Enemies round about.] Who carried away their Persons, as well as their Goods, and made them Slaves. For that seems to be the Meaning of *selling them*, which is a Phrase often used in this Book, iii. 8. iv. 2. and other Places, *Deut.* xxxii. 30. *Psal.* xlv. 12, &c. This was a just Punishment of God upon them, that as they served the Gods of the People round about them, ver. 12. so they should be Slaves to all those Nations round about them.

So that they could not any longer stand before their Enemies.] Being so far from being able to make any further Conquests, that they could not defend themselves.

Ver. 15. *Whithersoever they went out, the Hand of the LORD was against them for Evil.*] They had ill Success in all their Affairs, whether private or publick Business.

As the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn unto them.] *Deut.* xxviii. xxx. 17, 18. xxxi. 16, 17. and many other Places.

And they were greatly distressed.] As soon as they slackned their Endeavours to drive out the *Canaanites*, and made Leagues with them, (as we read in the foregoing Part of this Chapter) God began to withdraw himself from them, and would not drive out their Enemies from before them, ver. 3. But when by this means they were ensnared to worship their Gods, (as he foresaw they would, ver. 4.) then he gave them up into the Hands of those Enemies, with whom they had made Friendship, and suffered them to tyrannize over them, and use them cruelly.

Ver. 16. *Nevertheless, the LORD raised up Judges, &c.*] Extraordinary Rulers and Governors, whose Authority, I take to have been chiefly

chiefly in the time of War; they being raised up (by a particular Inspiration and Excitation from God) as it here follows, *to deliver them out of the Hands of those that spoiled them.* So that commonly, when they had wrought Deliverance for the People, and their Army was dismissed, they became private Men again; as appears by the Story of *Jephthah*, who would not undertake to lead them against the *Ammonites*, unless he might be their Governor when the War was done, *Judg. xi. 9.* and of *Gideon*, who refused to rule over them, when they offered the Government to him, after the Conquest of the *Midianites*, *viii. 22, 23.* Their Business therefore principally was to preserve the People's Liberties, to restore them, together with God's true Religion, and to prescribe what was to be done in such Cases; being a kind of *Dictators*, whose Power continued as long as there was Occasion for it. Yet it must be acknowledged that some of them had an established Authority for their Life over those whom they had rescued from Slavery, (not over the whole Commonwealth of *Israel*, part of which was some time in Peace, when another Part was oppressed) and managed Political Matters, when they were too hard for the ordinary Judges to divide them. (See *Deut. xvii. 9.*) Thus we read that *Deborah* a Prophetess, *judged Israel*, and that the People *came to her for Judgment*, before she excited *Barak* to vindicate their Liberties: But commonly they seem to have contented themselves with this, not minding Judgment; as *Samuel*, the last of them, chiefly exercised his Authority in Matters of Justice, *1 Sam. vii. 15, &c.* where he is said in his House at *Ramah* to have judged *Israel*, and ended their Controversies, and done Right to every Man: And when, by reason of Age, he could do this no longer, he committed it to his Sons. See *Corn. Bertram. de Repub. Judaica, Cap. 9. P. 109, &c.*

Ver. 17. *And yet they would not hearken to their Judges.]* Not constantly; but revolted again, *ver. 18, 19.*

But they went a Whoring after other Gods, and bowed themselves unto them.] Worshipped them publicly; which is commonly called going a Whoring from God, who had espoused them to himself.

They turned quickly out of the Way.] As soon as the Judge was dead, who had wrought Deliverance for them.

Which their Fathers walked in, obeying the Commandments of the LORD.] In the Days of *Joshua*, and the Elders which survived him, *ver. 7.*

But they did not so.] Whom the next Generation would not imitate.

Ver. 18. *And when the LORD raised them up Judges.]* This is the constant Phrase wherein he speaks of these great Men, whose Spirit was stirred up by an extraordinary Motion from God, to undertake Things beyond the Reach of human Wisdom or Power.

Then the LORD was with the Judge.] Endued him with Heroical Courage, and gave him wonderful Success. Here the *Targum* continues the same Language, *The WORD of the*

LORD was the Helper of the Judge. See Chap. i. 19, 22.

And delivered them out of the Hand of their Enemies all the Days of the Judge.] As long as he ruled over them, and kept them in Obedience to him. This signifies, that if they did not exercise their Authority, yet the Effects of it remained all the Days of their Life.

For it repented the LORD because of their Groanings, by reason of them that oppressed and vexed them.] He altered the Course of his Providence, when they not only sighed and groaned under their Oppressions, but cried unto him for Help, and promised Amendment, as we find they did, *iii. 9, 15. vi. 7, 8, &c.*

Ver. 19. *And it came to pass, when the Judge was dead they returned.]* To their former Idolatry.

And corrupted themselves more than their Fathers.] Who lived in the former Judge his Time, and had sorely smarted for this Sin, till God, upon their Repentance, sent them Deliverance.

In following other Gods to serve them, and bow down to them.] They either multiplied more strange Gods, or devised still new Rites of Worship contrary to God's Law. The common Service they paid to every one of them, was building Temples to their Honour, setting up Altars, planting Groves, burning Incense, and sacrificing Beasts.

They ceased not from their evil doings.] In the Hebrew, *Would not let fall their own Inventions;* but retained them, notwithstanding all that God had done, to bring them off from their Idolatry.

Nor form their stubborn Way.] But obstinately persisted in their evil Courses, as if nothing had been done to reclaim them.

Ver. 20. *And the Anger of the LORD was hot against Israel.]* This highly incensed the Divine Displeasure, and provoked him to punish them more grievously.

And he said, Because the People hath transgressed my Covenant which I commanded their Fathers, &c.] By making Leagues with the *Canaanites*, and not throwing down their Altars, &c. *Arias Montanus* very well observes, that this Verse expresses what great Reason there was for God's being exceeding angry with them. *First*, Because they had forsaken him, to whom they owed their being a Nation. *Secondly*, Because they had violated that Covenant, which was not a new or obscure Thing, but made long ago with their Fathers, who, it was very well known, had reaped the Benefit thereof. And, *Thirdly*, Because (as this Verse concludes) *they had not hearkened unto God's Voice, i. e. tho' he had often admonished them, by his Prophets, of their Duty, and chidden and threatened them; yet they would not mind what he said, but in a most rebellious manner gave themselves up to the Impieties of other Nations.*

Ver. 21. *I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them.]* That is, not presently, or so soon as he intended, if they had pleased him. See *ver. 23.*

Of the Nations which Joshua left when he died.] For God never intended they should be all rooted out at once, as hath been often noted from *Exod.* xxiii. 29, 30. yet their Expulsion had been more speedy, if they had obeyed him, than now he resolved it should be. Nor could it well be otherwise; for by being delivered into their Enemies Hands, to spoil and to enslave them, their Increase was hereby hindered; so that they were not able to people all the Land, so soon as they might have done, if they had been obedient: For then God promised to multiply them exceedingly, *Deut.* vii. 13, 14, &c.

Ver. 22. *That by them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the Way of the LORD to walk therein, as their Fathers did keep it, or not.]* That it might appear whether they would continue firm, as their Fathers resolved in the Service of God, (*Josh.* xxiv. 16, 24.) or revolt from him to serve other Gods.

Ver. 23. *Therefore the LORD left these Nations, without driving them out hastily, neither delivered he them into the Hand of Joshua.]* This was one Reason they were not all cast out at once, by the victorious Hand of Joshua; for if none of them had been left remaining, there would have been no Temptation to worship their Gods; which would have been all abolished with them. Another Reason is given of this, in the Place before mentioned, *Exod.* xxiii. 29, 30. and *Deut.* vii. 22.

C H A P. III.

Ver. 1. **N**OW these are the Nations which the LORD left, to prove Israel by them.] Having said in general, that God thought fit not to drive out all the *Canaanites*, that he might try the Care and Fidelity of his People in his Service, (ii. 22.) he now names the particular Nations, that remained unsubdued.

Even as many of Israel as had not known all the Wars of Canaan.] Such as were born since the War was ended; and had seen none of the wonderful Works of God in the Conquest of the Land; God intended to prove them, whether they would worship him, when they saw what they must expect, if they did not; viz. that he would let the *Canaanites*, their mortal Enemies, loose upon them.

Ver. 2. *Only that the Generation of the Children of Israel might know to teach them War.]* There was another Reason why they were left remaining, as was observed before in the last Verse of the foregoing Chapter: But this had been sufficient, if there had been no other; that the *Israelites* might not grow sluggish for want of some to awaken and exercise their Courage and keep up Martial Discipline among them; and that they might, by having powerful Enemies so near them, betake themselves to God constantly, and depend upon his Help and Succour, by whose Power their Fathers had brought them under.

At the least such as before knew nothing thereof.] If this was not needful for all, it was at least for such as had never handled Arms; that they

might be trained up to be ready upon Occasion to fight with their Enemies. For they being wholly bred to Husbandry, and feeding of Cattle, would have had no Military Discipline among them, if they had not had the *Canaanites* so near to them.

Or this may be the Meaning of this Verse, *They shall know what it is to be left to themselves:* For their Fathers fought by a Divine Power, but now they shall learn what it is to fight like other Men, without God to go along with them.

Ver. 3. *Namely, the five Lords of the Philistines.]* See upon *Josh.* xiii. 2, 3. and *Judg.* i. 18. where it appears, that three of them had been, in some measure, conquered; but it seems had recovered their Country again, by the Sloth of the *Israelites*.

And all the Canaanites.] These were a particular People of that Country, (as hath been often said) near to the Mid-land Sea, many of which still remained scattered up and down the Land.

And the Sidonians.] Who lived in the Territory belonging to the famous City of *Sidon*; who was one of the Sons of *Canaan*, *Gen.* x. 15.]

And the Hivites that dwelt in Mount Lebanon.] A famous Mountain in the North Part of *Canaan*.

From Baal-Hermón, unto the entering in of Hamath.] See in *Josh.* xi. 3. xiii. 5.

Ver. 4. *And they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken to the commandments of the LORD, &c.]* That their Virtue might appear, if they did not imitate these People: or their Baseness, if they did.

Ver. 5. *And the Children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites.]* The *Israelites* soon discovered their bad Disposition, in suffering all Sorts of the wicked People of this Land to remain and dwell with them; as if they were still the Possessors of this Country, and the Children of *Israel* but Intruders among them.

Ver. 6. *And they took their Daughters to be their Wives, and gave their Daughters to their Sons.]* Which was not only directly contrary to the Law of God, (*Deut.* vii. 3.) but an higher Breach of their Covenant with him, than the mere making Leagues with them.

And served their Gods.] As *Moses*, in the same Place, foretold they would, (*Deut.* vii. 4.) if they contracted such Marriages with them.

Ver. 7. *And the Children of Israel did Evil in the Sight of the LORD, and forgot the LORD their God.]* They grew in time so very wicked, that they not only worshipped other Gods, together with the LORD; but quite forgot him, and worshipped them alone.

And served Baalim and the Groves.] Some here take *Groves*, literally, for the Trees themselves that composed those shady Places, which were anciently consecrated to *Heroes*; being, some time, the Place of their Sepulchre; where their *Manes* were supposed to haunt. For *Baalim* were the same with *Heroes*; and Trees were accounted sacred Things by the ancient Heathen, who consecrated them to this or that

Deity, and trimmed them up with Ribbands; and adorned them with Lights, and made Vows to them, and hung the Spoils of their Enemies upon them. Infomuch that Travellers were wont to stop when they were to pass by them, as if they had been the Habitation of some God. But Mr. *Selden* thinks, that by Groves are to be here understood the *Images* of their Gods in the Groves; as it is certain they must signify in some Places. See upon Chap. vi. 25. And he probably conjectures, that there were several Goddesses, under the Name of *Ashtaroth*, worshipped in them. See the Place mentioned above, in his *De Diis Syris*. *Syn-tag.* 2. cap. 2.

And it is evident, that these Deities, whatsoever they were, were different from *Baalim*; for the Prophets of *Baal*, and the Prophets of the *Groves*, were distinct Persons, in 1 Kings xviii. 19.

Ver. 8. *Therefore the Anger of the LORD was hot against Israel.*] This Expression we had twice before. See Chap. ii. 14, 20.

And he sold them.] See in the same Place.

Into the Hand of Cushan-rishathaim King of Mesopotamia.] Of that Country, which lay between the two great Rivers of *Euphrates* and *Tigris*. So the first Enemy that oppressed them were the *Syrians*; who either out of Hatred, or Desire to enlarge their Dominions, came over *Euphrates* and invaded them.

And the Children of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight Years.] He forced them to buy their Peace upon hard Terms, and brought them under Tribute to him; but did not impose Garisons upon them; so that they more easily recovered their Liberty, when one appeared to head them. When these *eight Years* began, (that is, how long after the Death of *Joshua*) is variously disputed; but it is certain it was in the next Age (which in Scripture signifies about Three and Thirty Years) after *Joshua* and the Elders that survived him (during whose Time they served God, and lived in Freedom.) For *Caleb's* younger Brother, as it here follows, was the first Judge whom God raised up to them.

Ver. 9. *And when the Children of Israel cried unto the LORD.*] Returned to him, and acknowledged him to be their only God, of whom they earnestly begged Pardon, and implored Help with fervent Prayer; beseeching him to deliver them from this cruel Servitude; as he did *Jacob* their Fore-father, from the Bondage of *Laban* the *Syrian*.

He raised a Deliverer to the Children of Israel, who delivered them.] All the Judges are called by the Name of *Saviours*, or *Deliverers*, in *Nehemiah* ix. 27. because they rescued them from the Oppression of their Enemies, when they could not help themselves.

Even Othniel the Son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger Brother.] So he is called, i. 13. concerning which, see *Josh.* xv. 17.

Ver. 10. *And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him.*] He had an extraordinary Motion from God to take upon him the Government of the People; which none durst presume to do but such as were appointed by God, who was their King. *Josephus* thinks that God appeared

to them, or some way revealed his Will to them in these Matters; so that they were sure they acted by his authority. The *Chaldee* Paraphrast seems to favour the latter Opinion, who calls this Spirit *The Spirit of Prophecy*. Certain it is, that they had not only an inward Incitement to undertake the Deliverance of God's People; but were endowed with extraordinary Courage and Conduct; and it is likely with a singular Gift of Divine Eloquence, to persuade the People to forsake their Idolatry, and vindicate their Liberty.

And he judged Israel, and went out to War.] This was the first Part of the Office of a Judge, to plead their Cause, and avenge them of their Oppressors; as this Phrase of *Judging* is used, *Deut.* xxxii. 35, 36. and other Places. Tho' here being set before going to War, it may be thought that he first rectified what was amiss among them, and especially reduced them to the Worship of the LORD alone; and then went to fight against their Enemies.

And the LORD delivered Cushan-rishathaim, King of Mesopotamia, into his Hand.] They overthrew and entirely routed all his Forces, and, as the Words seem to import, took or slew the King himself.

And his Hand prevailed against Cushan-rishathaim.] So that he could not recover his Strength to oppress them any more.

Ver. 11. *And the Land had Rest forty Years.*] It doth not suit with my Design to enter into Chronological Disputes; and therefore I remit the learned Reader to the *Canon Chronicus* of Sir *J. Marsham*, Lib. 2. where he supposes the idolatrous Generation to have risen in the *Thirty-fourth* Year after the Death of *Joshua*; who lost their Liberty, and fell under the Oppression of *Cushan*, for the Space of *Eight Years*, and after their Deliverance from it, lived happily *Forty Years*. Which will appear in the Sequel to be more reasonable, than to interpret these Words as if they signified, *The Land rested in the Fortieth Year, after Joshua first settled them in Peace and Quiet*. So our great *Primate of Ireland*: Vide A. M. 2599.

And Othniel the Son of Kenaz died.] It is not certain in what Part of these Forty Years of Rest he died; nor is it material whether in the Beginning, Middle, or End of it.

Ver. 12. *And the Children of Israel did Evil again in the Sight of the LORD*] Fell into the Sin of Idolatry, after *Othniel* was dead.

And the LORD strengthened Eglon the King of Moab against them, because they had done Evil in the Sight of the LORD.] As he raised up Deliverers to *Israel*, when they were penitent; so he stirred up Enemies to them, and gave them Power also to oppress them, when they revolted from him. And the next Enemy to the *Syrians* were the *Moabites*; for since they worshipped the Gods of the People round about them, (Chap. ii. 12.) it was fit they should be punished by those very People.

Ver. 13. *And he gathered unto him the Children of Ammon and Amalek.*] Persuaded these two Nations, who were his near Neighbours, (*Moab* lying between them) to associate themselves with him in this War. Unto which they were

were easily inclined; especially *Amalek*; who had an old Grudge to the *Israelites*.

And went and smote Israel.] Either by a sudden Invasion, or in a pitched Battle.

And possessed themselves of the City of Palm-Trees.] That is, *Jericho*, as appears from *Deut.* xxxiv. 3: *Judg.* i. 16. Which tho' it was destroyed by *Joshua*, yet the Place where it stood remaining, it is likely they made Fortifications, and placed a strong Garrison there, that they might the better keep the whole Country in Subjection. For, as the Country thereabouts was very fertile (of which they deprived the *Israelites*, and sent the Riches of it to their own Country, which was not far off) so they hindered all Communication between those on this side *Jordan*, and those on the other side, but what they pleased to allow; and maintained a Correspondence with their own People, from whom they could receive more Forces, if there were need, by having the Command of the Passages over *Jordan*. By which means also they thought to secure their Retreat, if there should be Occasion, to their own Country.

Ver. 14. *So the Children of Israel served Eglon the King of Moab eighteen Years.*] He ruled all this time as an absolute Master over them, and imposed what Burdens he pleased upon them; of which, it is likely, the *Ammonites* and *Amalekites* had a Share, as a Reward of their Help and Assistance.

Ver. 15. *But when the Children of Israel cried unto the LORD.*] Humbled themselves before him, acknowledged their Offence, begged his Pardon, and beseeched his Help; as before, ver. 9.

The LORD raised them up a Deliverer.] As he had done before. See ver. 9.

Ehud the Son of Gera, a Benjamite.] Which Tribe was the most immediately oppressed, (the Country of *Jericho* being in it) and therefore one of them was very proper to be their Deliverer.

A Man left-handed.] The Hebrew Words *itter jad jemini* are very obscure, being used nowhere else but here, and xx. 16. In both Places the LXX translate them ἀμφοτεροδεξις, whom the Vulgar follows, *qui utraque manu pro dextra utebatur*, who could use both Hands, as we do our Right. This the Hebrew Phrase will bear, which literally signifies, as we translate it in the Margin, *shut of his Right Hand*, i. e. who did nothing with it, but used his Left though he could use both alike: Or, as *Josephus* will have it, τῶν χειρῶν τὴν ἀριστερὰν, ἀμείνων, *who of the two could use his Left Hand best*.

And by him the Children of Israel sent a Present unto Eglon King of Moab.] Some understand by this the Tribute that was laid upon them; but it rather signifies a voluntary Present, above their ordinary Payments; whereby they hoped to mollify him, and make him favourable to his loving Subjects: For *Mincha* is used for such Offerings as were presented to God to obtain his Favours.

Ver. 16. *But Ehud made him a Dagger.*] Privately prepared this Weapon, intending to make use of this Opportunity for their Deliverance.

Which had two Edges, of a Cubit Length.] Therefore *Josephus* calls it ξιφίδιον, *a little Sword*; which was long enough to do Execution, but so short as to be easily concealed.

And he did gird it under his Raiment.] Which the LXX and the Vulgar take to have been a Military Garment; but the Hebrew Word *Mad* signifies any Sort of Raiment.

Upon his Right Thigh.] To avoid all Suspicion, (for Men use to wear their Swords on their left Side) and that he might more readily draw it out, and use it with his Left Hand, when he should find Occasion.

Ver. 17. *And he brought the Present to Eglon King of Moab.*] Was admitted into his Presence and delivered the Present with his Right Hand, as Men usually do; which he could use, I suppose, as well as his Left, though not, perhaps, with so much Strength.

And Eglon was a very fat Man.] Which made him unwieldy, and less able and ready to rise up, and avoid or defend himself from a sudden Stroke. The LXX translate it ἀνὴρ ἀσθενὴς σφόδρα, an exceeding civil or courteous Man; which made it the more easy for *Ehud* to give the Blow when he embraced him perhaps, or stooped, when he rose out of his Seat to receive his Message in an obliging manner.

Ver. 18. *And when he had made an end to offer the Present.*] Which was done (as appears by this) with such Ceremony as was in use in those Days.

He sent away the People that bare the Present.] It was brought by some of his Retinue, (consisting, it is likely, of several things) who being all withdrawn, and gone some part of their Way homeward with him, he bad them go forward, and leave him to dispatch some private Business which he pretended: For such Designs, as he had in his Mind, seldom succeed where many are engaged in them.

Ver. 19. *And he himself turned again.*] As if he had forgotten something, or had met with some new Instructions by the Way.

From the Quarries that were by Gilgal.] Some understand by the Word we translate *Quarries*, a Place where they digged or hewed Stones; others, the Twelve Stones which *Joshua* placed in *Gilgal*. But the LXX, and the Vulgar take it for *Graven Images*; for so indeed the Word *Pesil* commonly signifies in Scripture; and so we translate it in the Margin of our Bible: Which when *Ehud* beheld, his Spirit was mightily stirred within him, (as *Conradus Pellicanus* explains this Passage) and he proceeded no further in his Return home, but went back with a Resolution to revenge this Affront to God, as well as the Oppression of his People. For it is to be supposed, the *Moabites* had set up these *Graven Images* in this Place, rather than any other; which had been famous for the Presence of God for a long time in it.

And said, I have a secret Errand unto thee, O King.] Being admitted again into the King's Presence, he desired a private Audience of him.

Who said keep Silence.] He bad *Ehud* say no more till all his Attendants were withdrawn, whom he would not have to hear the Message.

And

And all that stood by him went out from him.] It may seem strange, that a Prince should trust himself alone with one of that Nation, who he knew groaned under his Yoke; but his Mind was blinded by the Present, and by the Compliments wherewith it was delivered; and God deprived him, at this Time, of his wonted Prudence. For, as Solomon observes, *There is no Wisdom, nor Understanding, nor Counsel against the LORD:* Who intended he should be destroyed, *Prov. xxi. 30.*

Ver. 20. And Ebud came unto him.] Approached nearer to his Person.

And he was sitting in a Summer Parlour.] In a cool Room, (as the Hebrew Word imports) where he was defended from the Heat of the Sun, and enjoyed the fresh Air.

Which he had made for himself alone.] Where he was wont to retire from all Company, when he had a mind to sleep, perhaps in the Heat of the Day, or to dispatch Business with which he entrusted no body.

And Ebud said, I have a Message from God unto thee.] Which in some Sense was true, but not in that wherein the King understood it; who thought he had met with some Divine Apparition in the Way, or been at some Oracle; for he doth not say he had a Message from *Yehovah* the God of *Israel*, (whom he would have despised, perhaps, as *Pharoah* did) but from *Elohim*, which was a common Name to all Gods, *xxiv. 2, 15.*

And he rose out of his Seat.] Out of Reverence as to God, whose Words, he supposed, he was to hear. A remarkable Instance of the ancient Veneration Men paid to whatsoever carried the Name and Authority of God in it, and reproaches those who now behave themselves irreverently, even in his Worship and Service. See *Numb. xxiii. 18. 2 Kings xxiii. 3.*

Ver. 21. And Ebud put forth his Left Hand, and took the Dagger from his Right Thigh.] If the King had his Eye upon his Hands, it was upon the Right, and not the Left, so that he might more unobservedly employ it as he designed.

And thrust it into his Belly.] So that it pierced his Heart, (as *Josephus* understands it) or some other Vital Part; upon which he immediately died, without speaking a Word, or making a Noise to alarm his Servants who were without. Nothing can justify this Fact, but an Order from the LORD, which he not only pretended, but really had. See *ver. 26.*

Ver. 22. And the Haft also went in after the Blade.] The Thrust he made was so violent, that not only the Blade of the Dagger, but the Handle also, went into his Bowels.

And the Fat closed up the Blade.] And the Haft, so that they could not be seen.

So that he could not draw the Dagger out of his Belly.] But left it there, because he could take no hold of it.

And the Dirt came out.] All agree that the Word *Parshedona*, which is nowhere found but here, signifies the Dung or Excrements; which came not out at the Wound, (for that was closed) but at the usual Place; it being common for Bodies to purge after they are dead,

especially such corpulent ones as his was, in whose Bowels, no doubt, there were violent Convulsions made by this sudden Stroke.

Ver. 23. And Ebud went forth through the Porch.] It is very uncertain what the Hebrew Word *Misredona* signifies, which we translate *Porch*. Some take it for the Guard Chamber, (as the LXX seem to understand it) or a Place where the King's Servants sat; through which he passed boldly, that he might give no Suspicion of any Mischief he had done; Or, as *Kimchi* explains it, the Place where the People sat, who waited for Audience.

And shut the Doors of the Parlour upon him and locked them.] As he came out of the Parlour, he not only shut the Doors after him, and locked them; but, it is likely, took the Key away with him. There seem to have been double Doors, an inward and an outward, as is usual.

Ver. 24. And when he was gone out, his Servants came.] Seeing *Ebud* was gone from the King, his Attendants came into the Antichamber, (as we speak) to be ready at the King's Call, to wait his Pleasure.

And when they saw, that behold the Doors of the Parlour were locked, they said, Surely he covereth his Feet in the Summer Parlour.] They concluded he was easing Nature, as this Phrase is commonly understood here, and in *1 Sam. xxiv. 3.* for when they were about that Business, the long Garments which they wore in those Countries were so disposed as to cover their Feet. See *Gataker* in his *Cinnus*, Lib. 2. Cap. 3. But it may be understood, I think, of laying himself down to sleep, which they were wont to do in those Countries in the Heat of the Day, (*2 Sam. iv. 5.*) and then lying down in their Cloaths, it was necessary to cover their Feet for Decency's Sake, to keep their Garments from slipping up, and exposing those Parts which should not be seen. And this suits better with the Story than the other; for they thought fit to wait a great while before they entered the Chamber, that they might not disturb his Rest; whereas the other Business being soon dispatched, would not have occasioned their waiting so long. See the *Arabic* and *Syriac* Version, both here and upon *1 Sam. xxiv. 3.*

Ver. 25. And they tarried.] Waiting in the Anti-chamber.

Till they were ashamed.] Till they were in a great Confusion, not knowing what to think should be the Cause that he slept longer than ordinary.

And behold, he opened not the Door of the Parlour.] At which it is likely, after tedious Expectation, they knocked, and had no Answer.

Therefore they took a Key and opened them.] For in King's Courts, there were more than one who had Keys to the same Room.

And behold, their Lord was fallen down dead on the Earth.] Perhaps they did not at first perceive that he was killed; which might something retard their Pursuit of *Ebud*.

Ver. 26. And Ebud escaped while they tarried.] Their long Expectance of the King's awaking out of Sleep, gave him the Advantage of making his Escape.

And passed beyond the Quarries.] From whence he returned to do this Exploit, *ver. 19.* which had been Murder, if he had not had a Divine Warrant for what he did: Unto which none can pretend now, without blaspheming God as the Author of Sin; but then was evident by the wonderful Gifts of Wisdom, and Courage, and Might, wherewith such Men were divinely inspired. See *Grotius de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Lib. 1. Cap. 4. Sect. 19. N. 4.

And escaped unto Seirath.] Gilgal was so near to the Garrison which the *Moabites* had in those Territories, that he did not think himself safe till he was got out of the Tribe of *Benjamin* into the mountainous Country of *Ephraim*, where this Town was, upon the Confines of the Tribe of *Benjamin*.

Ver. 27. And it came to pass, when he was come.] To *Seira b.*

That he blew a Trumpet in the Mountain of Ephraim.] To summon those who were disposed to recover their Liberties, to take Arms and follow him.

And the Children of Israel went down with him from the Mount.] A considerable Body of Men, no doubt, presently met together, (being before prepared, it is likely, by his Emissaries) and marched after him into the Country of *Benjamin*, where the *Moabites* were settled.

And he before them.] He led them on as their Captain; and had many more, in all Probability, joined him as he marched further into the Country.

Ver. 28. And he said unto them, Follow after me.] Be not afraid to venture your Lives, as I will do for the Liberty of your Country.

For the LORD hath delivered your Enemies the Moabites into your Hand.] He was assured that God, who had succeeded his Enterprize, and deprived the *Moabites* of their supreme Head (whereby no doubt they were in great Confusion) would accomplish what he had begun, and give them a perfect Deliverance: With this Belief he endeavoured to possess their Souls, as if the thing was already done, which he knew would inspire them with such Courage as could not be withstood.

And they went down after him, and took the Fords of Jordan.] He proceeded prudently, as well as courageously; and therefore led them directly to the Fords of *Jordan*, of which they possessed themselves; that the *Moabites* who had settled themselves in that Part of *Judæa* (*ver. 13.*) might not be able to save themselves by retreating into their own Country, nor they in *Moab* be able to come to their Assistance.

And suffered not a Man to pass over.] To carry or bring any Intelligence.

Ver. 29. And they slew of the Moabites at that Time about ten thousand Men.] Who had taken Possession of the City of *Palm-trees*, (*ver. 13.*) and posted themselves thereabouts, to keep the *Israelites* in Subjection.

All lusty Men.] In the *Hebrew* it is, *all fat Men*; that is, (as some understand it) Men of Estates, or very wealthy Persons: Men of Quality, or of the better Sort, (as others expound it) who chose to transplant themselves hither, because of the Richness and Deliciousness of

this Country; but it may be interpreted *strong Men*, as our Translation imports, who were called out from among the *Moabites*, to keep the *Israelites* in greater Awe.

And all Men of Valour.] Who had given Proof of their undaunted Spirit in War.

And there escaped not a Man.] But they were all cut off, either by those that guarded the Fords, and intercepted their Passage into their own Country; or by the other Part of the Army of *Israel* who fell upon them, and drove them thither.

Ver. 30. So Moab was subdued that Day under the Hand of Israel.] This doth not signify that they brought the Country of *Moab* under their Subjection, as the *Moabites* had brought theirs, but that they freed themselves from the Yoke they had laid upon them, and served them no longer. See *ver. 14.*

And the Land had Rest fourscore Years.] Which the same great Man, mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, thus interprets, *ad A. M. 2679. Et quievit terra anno octuagesimo, post quietem priorem ab Othniele restitutam.* And the Land had Rest in the Eightieth Year, after the former restored to it by *Othniel*: But there is another Way which some learned Writers among the *Jews* suggest, of bringing the Years of Servitude and of Peace, mentioned in this Book, into such a Compass, as may agree with what is said in *1 Kings vi. 2.* concerning the Number of Years that passed from the Deliverance out of *Egypt* to the Building of *Solomon's Temple*: For they suppose that there was scarce any of the Judges who ruled over the whole Country of *Israel*, but some in one Part, and some in another; so that at the same time there were several Judges in several Parts of the Land; and Peace in one Part, when there was War in another. Accordingly our learned Chronologer *Sir J. Marsham* (who follows this Opinion) understands here by *the Land* which had Rest fourscore Years, not the Whole Land of *Israel*, but the Eastern Part of it, which had shaken off the Yoke of *Moab*; but in the mean time the *Philistines* invaded the Western Parts, as it here follows, and were repulsed by *Shamgar*, while the Eastern Countries enjoyed perfect Peace. This I take to be the clearest Account of these Words, *the Land had Rest forty Years*; that is, the Eastern Part of the Country, which had shaken off the Yoke of *Moab*, not the whole Land of *Israel*: For as the *Philistines* invaded the Western Parts, so *Jabin* afflicted the Northern (as it follows in the next Chapter) while the Oriental Tribes remained in Peace.

Ver. 31. And after him was Shamgar the Son of Anath.] It is not said of what Tribe he was, and it is in vain to enquire about it; but it is probable he was one of those Tribes that bordered upon the *Philistines*; because what he did was against them, and those were *Judah*, *Dan*, and *Ephraim*: Nor is there the least Signification how long he judged them; but he succeeding *Ehud*, his Government was in some Part of the fourscore Years before mentioned: And perhaps it was not long before that time wherein *Jabin* oppressed *Israel* in the Northern

A COMMENTARY

thern Parts, as may be probably gathered
n ver. 6.

Which slew of the Philistines six hundred Men.]

Now some of the People of Canaan made an Attempt upon the Israelites in the Western Parts, to bring them under their Power. And these Words sound as if Shamgar alone made Opposition to them, and slew the Number mentioned; being excited by the mighty Power of God, which gave him unwonted Courage and Strength; for he was raised up as the two foregoing great Men had been, by a Divine Inspiration, to be their Judge, as appears by the last Words of this Verse.

With an Ox-goad.] The Vulgar takes the Hebrew Word *Malmad* for a Plough-share, and the LXX favour this Interpretation: But if we may judge by the Derivation of the Word, our Translation is more probable; wherein we follow *Kimchi*, and other learned Jews, who take it for the Instrument whereby Oxen are provoked (and, as it were, put in Mind of their Duty) when they draw the Plough lazily. And thus *Lycurgus* is said to have overthrown the Forces of *Bacchus*, without any other Arms but *βασπλήγι*, an Ox-goad. So *Homer* describes the *Bacchæ* as put to flight *ἀνδροφόνου Αὐκέργης βάσπλήγι*. See *Bochartus*, L. 1. *Canaan*, Cap. 18.

And he also delivered Israel.] From hence it appears, that he was a Judge as well as the two former, though some both ancient and modern have questioned it; for this is the very Phrase whereby they are described, ii. 9, 15. And the first Words of this Verse signify as much; which say, that *after him* (i. e. *Ehud*) was *Shamgar*, who succeeded him; that is, in the Office of a Judge, as the Words naturally signify: And the great Slaughter he made of the *Philistines* argues the same; for it manifestly was an heroical Act, like that of *Samson*, who slew a Thousand with the Jaw-bone of an Ass: Neither of which could have been performed, but by a Divine Power wherewith they were possessed. It is not said here indeed how long he continued to judge them, nor from what Oppressions he delivered them; but he is a Deliverer who preserves a Nation from being oppressed, as well as he who rescues them from Oppression when they groan under it: And that it is likely was the Case of *Shamgar*, who, when the *Philistines* came to invade his Country, gave them a Repulse with the Loss of six hundred of their Men; which, it is probable, discouraged them from further Attempts. And this being done without any Weapon but an Ox-goad, it is likely he was at Plough when the *Philistines* made this Inroad to plunder and spoil the Country; feeling a strong Impulse upon him to oppose them, though he had no other Arms, nor any to assist him, but such of his Servants as were perhaps at Plough with him. Thus some great Men among the ancient *Romans* were called from the Plough to be their *Dictators*. But I will only add a strange Passage out of the *Midrash* upon *Levit. xvii. 3.* who mentioning these Words, *and he also delivered Israel*, saith, *Thus he saved them by the Hand of other Judges who being but Flesh and Blood, yet fell into Sla-*

very again; but in the Age to come, (i. e. of the Messiah) I in my own Substance will redeem you, and yet shall not be reduced into Servitude any more. According to what Isaiah saith, xlv. 17. But Israel shall be saved by the LORD with an everlasting Salvation, &c. See Raymund in his Pugio Fidei, P. 510.

C H A P. IV.

Ver. 1. **A**ND the Children of Israel again did Evil in the Sight of the LORD.]

See iii. 12.

After the Death of Ehud.] And of *Shamgar*. Concerning whom there is no further Mention made, because he did nothing more than this one memorable Act; Religion being reformed by *Ehud*, who left it so at the time of his Death; when, it is likely, the *Philistines* seeing their Chieftain gone, made the forenamed Inroad upon the *Israelites*; but they being not yet openly fallen into Idolatry, God was pleased to raise up *Shamgar* to give them a Repulse, before they could possess themselves of any Part of the Country, as the *Moabites* had done. After which Blow given them by this single Champion, it was a long time before we read of any Disturbance they gave them; though *Shamgar*, it is probable, lived but a short time after this noble Achievement. And then, when *Ehud* and he had been some time dead, the *Israelites* forgot the wonderful Works of God, and returned to their old Sin: For so the Words in the Hebrew are to be understood, which run thus, *and Ehud was dead*: For that Particle *ve*, which we translate *and*, oft-times signifies *because*; and here makes these Words the Reason of their Relapse, *because Ehud was dead*, who had been the great Instrument of bringing them back to God, and keeping them, while he lived, in his Service.

Ver. 2. *And the LORD sold them.]* Delivered them up to be made Slaves. See iii. 8.

Into the Hands of Jabin King of Canaan.] Of that Part of the Country, where the People properly called *Canaanites* now dwelt under his Government.

Who reigned in Hazor.] In the Region belonging unto *Hazor*; for the City itself was burnt by *Joshua*, *Josh. xi. 10.* and the King of it also slain, as we read there, *xii. 9.* whose Name also was *Jabin*, *Josh. xi. 1.* of whose Posterity it is probable this *Jabin* was; whose Name was common to all the Kings of that Country, as *Pharaoh* was to the Kings of *Egypt*. It is possible, indeed, that *Hazor* might be rebuilt, as some other Cities were, and possessed by the ancient Inhabitants; but there is no need to suppose that; for he might reign in *Hazor*, just as the *Moabites* possessed *Jericho*; that is, the Region appertaining to it. And, according to the Opinion I mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, *ver. 30.* *Jabin* is supposed to have invaded and brought under only the Northern Tribes; those in the East remaining at the same time in Peace, after the Expulsion of the *Moabites*: Twenty Years after which (*Sir John Marsham* makes account) *Jabin's* Dominion

minion over the Northern Tribes began. The Text indeed makes no such Distinction, *the Children of Israel* in general being represented as sold under *Jabin* for their Sins; yet it is said, *Ver. 10.* that *Barak* gathered his Army out of the Tribes of *Zebulun* and *Naphtali*, which are the Tribes supposed to be alone oppressed by *Jabin*. Other Tribes indeed joined with them, and they that did not, are very much blamed for it by *Deborah* in her Song, (even the *Reubenites*, and they beyond *Jordan*, *Ver. 14, 15, 16.*) for it might very well be expected, that they who lived in Peace and Ease, should be ready to assist their Brethren, who were heavily oppressed.

The Captain of whose Host was Sisera, who dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles.] If we suppose that *Hazor* lay in its Ruins, then *Harosheth* was the Royal City wherein *Jabin* dwelt, as well as *Sisera*. Which is called *Harosheth of the Gentiles*, because People of several Nations fled hither under his Protection, when they heard that he had possessed himself of that Country, and kept the *Israelites* out of it.

Ver. 3. And the Children of Israel cried unto the LORD; for he had nine hundred Chariots of Iron.] His Power was so increased, that they had no Hope to redeem their Liberty, but by the Help of the LORD. It may seem strange that in this petty Kingdom, they should be so strong in Chariots; when *Mithridates* had but an hundred in his Army, and *Darius* no more than two hundred, as good Authors inform us. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozycon*, P. I. Lib. II. Cap. 9. p. 156. I suppose they placed their chiefest Strength in these; being not able to set out a great Number of Horsemen.

And twenty Years they mightily oppressed the Children of Israel.] Who groaned under a long Servitude; during which time, *Jabin* squeezed them, I suppose, by heavy Exactions; which enabled him to raise greater Forces than he had at first, when he brought them under his Power. For GOD's Anger increased by their frequent Revolts from him; and he punished them more severely than he had done before by the *Moabites*; the *Canaanites* being the old Inhabitants of the Land, who hated them mortally, and kept them under a forer as well as a longer Oppression, than the *Moabites* had done.

Ver. 4. And Deborah the Prophetess.] Such an one as *Miriam*, endued with divine Gifts of Wisdom to instruct, direct, and govern others. For she was not only instructed with the Knowledge of divine Things; but also was excited by the holy Spirit (as *Kimchi* here notes) to declare the Will of GOD to the People (which was the proper Office of a Prophet) as appears by the following Part of this History. Her Name in *Hebrew* signifies a *Bee*; which hath been given (as learned Men have observed) by other Nations, to illustrious Women. As among the *Greeks*, the Nymph said to be the Nurse of *Jove*, is called *Melissa*; and the Wife of *Periander* King of *Corinth*, had the same Name.

The Wife of Lapidoth.] Or, as others translate it, *a Woman of Lapidoth*; taking this Word

to signify a Place, not a Person. But our Translation seems the most natural, and is to be preferred to that of *R. Solomon* and others, who translate it *a Woman of Splendors*; that is, an illustrious Woman.

She judged Israel at that time.] Had the Supreme Authority over them; being so well known to be divinely inspired, that it procured her universal Reverence, and Submission to her Judgment.

Ver. 5. And she dwelt under the Palm-Tree of Deborah.] Or, as the LXX, and the *Vulgar* understand it, *she sat* under the Palm-Tree, when she administered Judgment. Whence the Tree was called by her Name; because it was the Place where all resorted to her.

Between Ramah and Beth-el.] That is, in the Confines of the Tribes of *Benjamin* and *Ephraim*. For *Ramah* was a City in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, and *Beth-el* in the Tribe of *Ephraim*.

In Mount Ephraim.] In one of the Mountains in the Borders of that Country; for tho' the Tree was near both Tribes, yet it stood in the Tribe of *Ephraim*. The *Jews* (as appears by the *Chaldee* Paraphrase) from hence conclude, she was a very great Woman, who had noble Plantations in *Fericho*, *Ramah*, *Beth-el*, and other Places; that is, of Palms, saith *R. Solomon*, in *Fericho*, of Vineyards in *Ramah*, and of Oliveyards in the Plain of *Beth-el*. And from her dwelling in a Mount, and being a Prophetess, and a Governess, and other Things, some learned Men image the Story of the *Theban Sphinx* was invented by the *Greeks*. See *Bochartus*, Lib. I. *Canaan*, Cap. 16.

And the Children of Israel came up to her for Judgment.] For Direction and the Ending of Differences, by deciding Causes; which none could do with such Satisfaction as she did. By which it appears, that tho' *Jabin* oppressed them sorely, yet it was rather by rigorous Taxations, than infringing all their Laws; the Course of which he did not stop, but suffered to be administered by their own Officers. And he took the less Notice of it, perhaps, because the Supreme Judicature was exercised by a Woman; from whose Power and Authority he thought there was no Reason to apprehend any Danger. It may be probably hence gathered, that there was no such *Sanhedrim* in these Days, as the *Jews* conceive there always was in the most early Times: For why should they go to her for Judgment, if there were a Court of LXX eminent Persons then sitting at *Shiloh*?

Ver. 6. And she sent and called.] A plain Act of Authority, which was owned by the whole Nation.

Barak the Son of Abinoam.] Concerning whom we know no more (for that he was *Deborah's* Husband, or, as others say, her Son, are ungrounded Conceits of some of the *Jews*) but that he was born or dwelt in a famous City in the Tribe of *Naphtali*, as it follows in the next Words.

Out of Kedesh Naphtali.] There were several Cities of this Name. One in the Tribe of *Issachar*, 1 *Chron.* vi. 72. another in the Tribe of *Judah*, *Josh.* xv. 23. and therefore for Distinction sake, this is called *Kedesh Naphtali*; which

was a City of great Note, in the upper *Galilee*, belonging to the *Levites*, and a City of Refuge.

And said unto him, Hath not the LORD God of Israel commanded, saying.] She could not think he doubted of the Commission she now gave him from God; which he received as an Oracle.

Go, and draw.] The *Vulgar* take the Word *draw* to signify gathering Forces together: But the *LXX* take it to be of the same Import with the foregoing Word; signifying that he should go till he drew near to Mount *Tabor*.

Towards Mount Tabor.] A noble Mountain in *Galilee*, not far from *Kedesh*, in the Tribe of *Zebulun*; and in the Confines of *Issachar* and *Manasseh*: Which had a very large Plain at the Top of it (as *Josephus* tells us, who calls it *Staburium*, L. 4. de Bello Jud. C. 2.) where he might draw up an Army, and exercise them very conveniently.

And take with thee ten thousand Men.] Who were moved to lift themselves under him, by the Proclamation of this Commission, which he brought with him from God.

Of the Children of Naphtali, and of the Children of Zebulun.] She thought he need go no further than these two Tribes, which were nearest to him; but others also offered their Service out of *Manasseh* and *Issachar*, as appears from ver. 14, 15.

Ver. 7. *And I will draw unto thee.*] These are the Words of God, (which *Deborah* pronounced in his Name) signifying, as *Arias Montanus* understands the Word *draw*, that he would, by his secret Providence, incline *Sisera* to come within his Power to destroy him; as Hunters (unto whom Warriors are compared) entice wild Beasts to fall into their Toils.

To the River Kishon.] Which was near Mount *Tabor*; having its Beginning at the Foot of it.

Sisera the Captain of Jabin's Army, with his Chariots and his Multitude.] Wherewith he intended to encompass this Mountain; and block up *Barak* till he forced him to yield up himself unto him.

And I will deliver him into thine Hand.] This shews *Deborah* to have been endued with the highest Gift of Prophecy; which was to foretel certainly Things to come.

Ver. 8. *And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then will I go; but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go.*] He is commended for his Faith in God by the Apostle, *Heb. xi. 32.* as well as other great Worthies in ancient Time; tho' it was so weak and imperfect, that he made Conditions with God's Messenger, and absolutely refused to obey, unless they were granted. He had great Reason, he thought, for it; because he might want her Advice in doubtful Matters, and her Authority also, both to gather Soldiers, and to keep them together in good Order, and to inspire them with Courage. The *LXX* here add a great many Words, which make this the Reason of his Backwardness; that without her he should not be able to know the best Time of giving *Sisera* Battle.

Ver. 9. *And she said, I will surely go with thee.*] She saw he had Faith enough to under-

take the Enterprize, and therefore consented to his Proposal.

Notwithstanding the Journey that thou takest.] In the Hebrew it is, *the Way that thou takest.* Which may signify the Course which he had resolved upon, not to go without her.

Shall not be for thine Honour.] Tho' his Faith was accepted; yet the Weakness of it something eclipsed his Glory.

For the LORD shall sell Sisera into the Hand of a Woman.] It is a great Part of the Glory of a Conqueror, to take the General of the Enemy's Army, or to kill him with his own Hand; which she tells him should be denied him, as a small Punishment of his Backwardness to do as he was bidden; and as he would not go without a Woman, so a Woman should take away this Honour from him.

And Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh.] She made no Delay, but immediately accompanied him to his own City; where he began, I suppose, his Levy of Men.

Ver. 10. *And Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh.*] He caused Proclamation to be made of God's Command, and his own Intentions, in these two Tribes; who resorted to him in great Numbers.

And went up with ten thousand Men.] He picked, I suppose, Ten thousand Men out of those who flocked to him; and went up with them to Mount *Tabor*.

At his Feet.] That is, they followed him as their Leader. Tho' it may signify that they were all *Footmen*; there being no Horses in *Judaea*, which they brought out of other Countries. This made the Victory the more glorious, by the Overthrow of a great many Chariots and Horses, in the opposite Army.

And Deborah went up with him.] To encourage him and his Forces, now they were gathered.

Ver. 11. *Now Heber the Kenite, who was of the Children of Hobab, the Father-in-Law of Moses.*] See *Numb. x. 29.* This is interposed to explain what follows, concerning *Jael* who was *Heber's* Wife.

Had severed themselves from the Kenites.] Who went along with the Children of *Judab*, to settle among them, *Judg. i. 16.* What the Reason was of *Heber's* leaving them, as they all left the Plain of *Jericho*, is not known; but there was a special Providence of God in it.

And pitched his Tent.] The *Kenites* lived after the Manner of the *Midianites* (from whom they descended) in Tents, not in Houses.

Unto the Plain of Zainaim.] A Place in the Tribe of *Naphtali*, *Josb. xix. 33.* Where there was a Plain, or (as the *LXX* expounds the Hebrew Word *Alon*) a Grove of Oaks, under the Shadow of which their Tents were pitched.

Which was by Kedesh.] Tho' they loved to live in the open Fields, yet not far from a City.

Ver. 12. *And they shewed Sisera, that Barak the Son of Abinoam was gone up to Mount Tabor.*] They could not want Intelligence of a Thing done so publickly as this was; and the Words seem to import, that *Sisera* had many who informed him of all that passed.

Ver. 13. *And Sisera gathered together all his Chariots, even nine hundred Chariots of Iron.]* In which (as I said, Ver. 3.) their main Strength consisted. But they being unfit for Service in mountainous Countries, as I have often observed; it is probable they placed them so below the Mountain, as to coop up Barak there; by seizing all the Avenues, and hindring all Provisions from being brought to him.

And all the People that were with him.] As great a Number of Footmen, as came to him upon the Summons he sent forth, to require them to appear on this Occasion. For so the Word *gathered together* signifies in the Hebrew (as we observe in the Margin of our Bibles) *gathered by Cry or Proclamation.*

From Harosheth of the Gentiles, unto the River Kishon.] With whom he marched from that City to this River; which descended, as I said, from the Foot of Mount Tabor.

Ver. 14. *And Deborah said unto Barak, Up.]* Make no Delay.

For this is the Day in which the LORD hath delivered Sisera into thine Hand.] She speaks of the Victory as already gained, that she might work in him a full Assurance thereof. This doth not contradict what was said Ver. 9. that God would *sell Sisera into the Hand of a Woman*: For both were true; he and his Army were delivered into the Hand of Barak, to be routed by him; but he, in his Flight, fell into Jael's Hands to be killed. How long this was after Sisera encamped at the River Kishon, we have no Means to know; but it was upon some Day, when Deborah knew the Army of Sisera lay secure in their Quarters, or were about fortifying the Passages more strongly; or were to be joined with greater Forces; or some other Way might be taken at Advantage.

Is not the LORD gone out before thee?] As a General doth before his Army; to animate, and raise their Courage.

So Barak went down from Mount Tabor, and ten thousand Men after him.] It is not said that Deborah went with him any further than to Mount Tabor: Where it is likely, his Faith was grown so strong, that he durst undertake any thing, without her Presence with him.

Ver. 15. *And the LORD.]* Who conducted Barak, as he did his Army, Ver. 14.

Discomfited Sisera, and all his Chariots, and all his Host.] They did not expect such a bold Salley as this, which struck such a sudden Terror into them; for he fell upon them, it is likely, before they were aware, which put them into the greater Confusion. The LORD also struck a Terror into them (as the Word *Hamam* imports) by a Noise of Thunder and Lightning; as the Word is used 1 Sam. vii. 10. and also in Josh. x. 10. where we read the *Canaanites* were discomfited by great Hail-stones falling down upon them: Or he made a terrible Sound of Horses and Chariots rattling in their Ears, by the Ministry of his Angels, in the Clouds; as he did in the Days of Elisha, 2 Kings vii. 6. which seems to be acknowledged by Deborah, in her Song in the next Chapter, Ver. 20.

With the Edge of the Sword.] This Terror and

Confusion wherein they were, exposed them to be slain easily.

So that Sisera lighted down off his Chariot.] Which he thought did not make Haste enough to carry him out of Danger; and, besides, made it known where he was.

And fled away on his Feet.] As a common Soldier, that he might not be discovered; and that he might likewise secure himself, by his speedy running: For antiently valiant Men were wonderful swift of Foot, as it is noted of Asahel, 2 Sam. ii. 18. and every one knows it was the Character of the famous Achilles among the Greeks.

Ver. 16. *But Barak pursued after the Chariots, and after the Host, unto Harosheth of the Gentiles.]* He resolved to follow his Blow, to the very Gates of their own City.

And all the Host of Sisera fell upon the Edge of the Sword.] In the pursuit, he and his Men cut off all they overtook.

And there was not one of them left.] Which was their whole Army; not one escaping to carry the News of their Defeat to Jabin. Or, there was not one Man to be seen, in the Way to Harosheth; but they were all scattered to shift where they could for themselves.

Ver. 17. *Howbeit Sisera fled away on his Feet to the Tent of Jael, Wife of Heber the Kenite.]* Only Sisera, by his swift running, got, as he thought, into a Place of Safety, in the Tent of Jael; her Husband, perhaps, being abroad in the Field, and she only at Home. Women also had their Apartments by themselves, in a Tent of their own, as appears by Gen. xxiv. 67. (see there and Gen. xxxi. 33.) where he imagined no Search would be made for him.

And there was Peace between Jabin King of Hazor, and the House of Heber the Kenite.] It seems Heber was a considerable Person, who had a great Family, and many Dependants; like that of Abraham, Gen. xiv. 14. How he came to escape the fore Oppression under which the Israelites groaned (being incorporated into their Nation and Religion) and to live at Ease in a Time of great Distress, we can but conjecture. Perhaps their Manner of Life, retired from Towns and Company, made Jabin not fear any Danger from them; and if they still kept close to their Religion, when the Israelites were Apostates, God inclined the Heart of Jabin to be favourable to them, and give no Molestation to his harmless Neighbours; who, perhaps, purchased their Freedom from Vexation, by their frequent Incursions.

Ver. 18. *And Jael went out to meet Sisera.]* She watched, it is likely, to hear the Event of Sisera's Expedition; and seeing him come with great Speed towards her House, went out, to invite him there to repose himself.

And said unto him, Turn in, my Lord, turn in, fear not.] She assured him there was no Body in the Tent to do him any Hurt. Which was true; and it is not certain that she now intended to do, what afterward she did.

And when he had turned in unto her into the Tent, she covered him with a Mantle.] Being weary, he desired to take some Rest; when it was proper to throw a Covering over him, to

preserve him, being very hot, from taking Cold. What kind of Covering this was, which the *Hebrews* call *Semicha*, (and we translate *Mantle*) is not very material. They say it was a thick Covering, which hath Flocks of Wool on both Sides; such as our double Rugs. See *Bochart*, Lib. I. *Canaan*, Cap. 42.

Ver. 19. *And he said unto her, give me, I pray thee, a little Water to drink, for I am thirsty.*] By the Heat of the Fight, and his long Running.

And she opened a Bottle of Milk.] Out of Respect to him, she brought him the best Liquor she had, and of the best Sort; for it appears by Ver. 25. of the next Chapter, that the Cream was not taken off from it. It is possible also she might design, by this Draught, to throw him into a sounder Sleep; for Milk, when largely drank, flies up into the Head, and causes Drowsiness. But however that be, it is certain Milk was antiently accounted the most agreeable Nourishment, which *Hippocrates* calls ἀδελφὸν καὶ σὺλγεῖν to human Bodies. And therefore the most warlike Nations lived upon it, more than any other Food; as *Hermannus Conringius* hath shewn at large in his Book *de Habitus Germanorum Corporum causis*.

And gave him Drink, and covered him.] He rose up to drink; and then lying down again, she covered him as before.

Ver. 20. *Again he said unto her, Stand in the Door of the Tent.*] Because he doth not say, *Stand I pray thee*, (as he did before when he asked for Drink) some fancy (particularly *Arias Montanus*) that he spake this imperiously; laying his Commands upon her, as a Confederate of his Master: But I see no ground to think, that, when he was in such Need of her Friendship, he would take upon him so much as to give her a Charge to do any thing, but rather intreat it of her.

And it shall be when any Man doth come, and enquire of thee, and say, Is there any Man here?] Who was not of their own Family.

That thou shalt say, No.] They imagined there was no Harm in telling an officious Lye, to deceive an Enemy; that they might preserve a Friend or Ally, as he was.

Ver. 21. *Then Jael Heber's Wife took a Nail of the Tent.*] Or one of the great Pins wherewith the Tent was fastened to the Ground. For she had no better Instrument at Hand (Sword, or such like Weapon, being not usually kept in Womens Tents) and this she knew how to use more readily than any other; being accustomed, it is likely, when they removed from one Place to another, to take up her Tent, and to fasten it again by striking such Nails into the Earth.

And took an Hammer in her Hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the Nail into his Temples.] Where it would most easily enter (being the thinnest Part of the Skull) and most speedily dispatch him.

And fastened it into the Ground.] Upon which he lay (not on a Bed) with a Carpet, or some such Thing under him; as the Manner was in those Countries.

For he was fast asleep and weary.] His Weariness made him sleep soundly.

So he died.] She might as well have let him lie in his profound Sleep, till *Barak* came, and took him; if she had not felt a divine Power moving her to this, that the Prophecy of *Deborah* might be fulfilled. Nothing but this Authority from God, of which she was certain, could warrant such a Fact as this. Which seemed a Breach of Hospitality, and to be attended with several other Crimes; but was not so, when God, the Lord of all Mens Lives, ordered her to execute his Sentence upon him.

Ver. 22. *And behold, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him.*] As she had done *Sisera*, Ver. 18.

And said unto him, Come, and I will shew thee the Man whom thou seekest.] Before he made any Enquiry, she knew he was desirous, above all Men, to take *Sisera*; and, perhaps, she knew, by an Inspiration, that he was in Quest of him.

And when he came into the Tent, behold, Sisera lay dead, and the Nail was in his Temples.] He lay in the Place and Posture wherein he was killed, that *Barak* might see the Prophecy of *Deborah* made good.

Ver. 23. *So God subdued on that Day Jabin the King of Canaan, before the Children of Israel.*] So that he was not able to oppress them any longer, but they were restored to perfect Liberty.

Ver. 24. *And the Hand of the Children of Israel prospered and prevailed against Jabin King of Canaan.*] They prosecuted this Day's Victory, with new Successes; wherein his Forces were overthrown in other Battles, and his Cities taken.

Until they had destroyed Jabin King of Canaan.] To the utter Ruin of this Kingdom of the *Canaanites* in *Hazor*: For *Jabin* himself, as *Arias Montanus* thinks, was slain at the Brook *Kishon*, *Psalms* lxxxiii. 9. (tho' it must be confessed, that may be meant only of his Forces) so that we hear of none of his Name, in future Times. And herein the *Israelites* seem to me to have begun to be sensible of their Duty; which was to extirpate the People of *Canaan*, and not merely to bring them under Tribute, *Deut.* vii. 2, 3, 4.

C H A P. V.

Verse 1. *THEN sang Deborah, and Barak the Son of Abinoam, in that Day, this Song.*] It was composed by *Deborah* (Ver. 7.) being a Prophetess, one of whose special Gifts was to sing God's Praises (1 *Chron.* xxv. 1, 2, 3) and commanded to be sung by the Authority of *Barak*; who was now, I suppose, become a Judge, upon this great Deliverance God had wrought by him. For it is not to be thought, that these two Persons alone sang this Song; but all the Elders of the People were called together in one Assembly, to sing it with them; and they afterward delivered it to all the People. It was likely it was composed and sung after they had completed their Victory by the Destruction of *Jabin's* Kingdom. For the Prophets were taught such Sublimity of Thought and Speech,

as are used in their Songs, by these Admiration of such wonderful Events as they observed.

Ver. 2. *Praise the LORD for the avenging of Israel, when the People willingly offered themselves.*] It is evident to all, that this Hymn is expressed in another kind of Language, than the historical Part of this Book; and in a Language so majestic, in such Variety of elegant Figures, and such native Expressions of those Affections which the Occasion required, that none of the ancient Greek or Latin Poets have equalled; at least it appears; there was a most excellent Spirit of Poetry among the Hebrews, especially such of them as were divinely moved, when the Greeks lay in dark Ignorance.

And first she excites all the People to give Thanks unto God, and acknowledge his Wisdom and Power, in taking Vengeance of their Oppressors, and in moving the Hearts of so many especially in *Naphtali* and *Zebulun*, voluntarily to lift themselves to fight against the LORD's Enemies: Where it is to be noted, that she very wisely excites them so to ascribe the Victory unto God, as not to forget the Instruments he used to obtain it; for that she knew would be a great Encouragement to others in time to come, to engage themselves in such Enterprises, when they saw these Men so highly praised, and looked upon as employed by God in his Service.

Ver. 3. *Hear, O ye Kings, give Ear, O ye Princes.*] Next, she calls upon all the neighbouring Potentates, to give attentive Heed unto her Song; whereby they might understand what God had done for *Israel*, and learn from thence not to oppress them, when it was in their Power; for fear of the same Vengeance which God had taken upon *Jabin*.

I, even I, will sing unto LORD, I will sing Praises to the LORD God of Israel.] Who she would have the World know, was superior to all in Power, and would defend his People, while they depended on him alone.

Ver. 4. *LORD, when thou wentest out of Seir, when thou marchedst out of Edom.*] This is but a Repetition of the same Thing; *Edom* and *Seir* signifying the Country where the Posterity of *Esau* dwelt, who refused to give *Israel* a Passage through their Land, as the LORD led them into *Canaan*; and therefore he conducted them from thence another Way, and made them encompass that Land: (*Numb. xxi. 4. Deut. ii. 1.*) And when they had left it behind them (which is here called *marching out of Edom*) then he wrought for them astonishing Things, as it follows in the next Words.

The Earth trembled, and the Heavens dropped, the Clouds also dropped Water.] These are poetical Phrases, to express the great Consternation in which all those Countries were, when they saw *Sibon* King of the *Amorites*, and *Og* the King of *Basban*, overthrown on a sudden by the *Israelites*, and utterly destroyed. See *Numb. xxi. 21, &c.*

Ver. 5. *The Mountains melted from before the LORD.*] All the Inhabitants of those Mountains.

Even that Sinai, from before the LORD God of Israel.] Just as *Sinai* trembled and quaked at the giving of the Law.

In these two Verses she turns her Speech unto God, and commemorates his wonderful Acts in former times, with which she compares the glorious Deliverance he had given them now: As much as to say, his Power was not at all decayed, but he was as terrible to his Enemies in her Days, as he had been in former times.

Ver. 6. *In the Day of Shamgar the Son of Anath, in the Days of Jael.*] The Sense of this Verse will be very plain, if we translate these Words, as I think the Hebrew will bear, *from the Days of Shamgar, &c.* After his Death they fell into Sin and great Misery. And *Jael* is here mentioned, not as a Judge, (as *Rasi* and *Rabag* fancy) but as a great Woman of a masculine and valiant Spirit, who yet could do nothing to hinder those Spoils that were committed.

The Highways were unoccupied.] The People being corrupted in their Religion, broke out into all Manner of Violence, and turned Highway Robbers; so that Men durst not travel in the common Road upon their Occasions, but were fain to seek for By-Paths, because the Highways were infested by Thieves: Or this may be meant of Robberies, which *Jabin's* Soldiers committed, after he had brought them in Subjection to him; who took no Care to protect the *Israelites*, but suffered their Country to be ravaged by his Troops.

The Travellers walked through By-Ways.] In the Hebrew (as in the Margin of our Bibles is observed) the Words are *the Walkers of Paths*: By which we may understand Men accustomed to travel, who, tho' they went in great Companies together, yet durst not venture in the direct Road, but went about through *crooked Ways*, (as the Hebrew Word signifies, which we translate *By-Ways*) by which means Commerce was very much obstructed.

Ver. 7. *The Inhabitants of the Villages ceased, they ceased in Israel.*] Men were not safe in their own Houses; which were broken open, if they lived in Villages, and therefore they forsook them, and fled to walled Towns, and fortified Places.

Until that I Deborah arose.] This some of the Jews take to be a proud and arrogant Expression, for which the holy Spirit was taken from her: But *Rasi* (who reports this Conceit) soberly acknowledges, that they are not Words of Boasting, but of Joy and Gladness.

That I arose a Mother in Israel.] A Judge or Ruler of God's People. For as Men that governed were called *Fathers* of their Country, so it was proper for her, being a Woman, to call herself a *Mother in Israel*; among whom she did such great Things, and governed with so much Prudence, that it made her famous in other Countries. For very learned Men think, as I noted above, that the Story of *Sphinx* among the Greeks was made out of the History of *Deborah*, she being a Judge among the *Benotians*, as *Deborah* was in *Israel*. See *Bochart* in the Book before named; and *Hermannus Witsius*

zius more lately, in his *Miscellanea Sacra*, Lib. I. Cap. 23.

Ver. 8. *They chose new Gods.*] That is, the *Israelites*, after the Death of *Ebud*, forsook the LORD, and served *Baalim* and *Ashtaroth*, (as they had done formerly, ii. 13. iii. 7.) or perhaps they introduced the Worship of some other Gods, whom they had not served before, fancying they might be more powerful than their former had proved.

Then was War in the Gates.] This was the Fountain of their Calamities; for GOD immediately delivered them into the Hand of some Enemy or other, who possessed themselves of their Cities and strong Holds, for that's the Meaning of *War in the Gates*. Their Enemies seized on their Cities and Fortresses; for their Strength was in their *Gates*; where sat also the Courts of Justice.

Was there Spear or Shield seen among forty thousand in Israel?] They were generally disarmed, for the securing their Subjection to the *Canaanites*; as afterwards the *Philistines* took the same Course with them, 1 Sam. xiii. 19. Here the *Targum* makes a strange Excursion in mustering up the many thousand Commanders, and Sword-men, and Spear-men, and Archers, &c. that were in the Army of *Sisera*.

Ver. 9. *My Heart is towards the Governors of Israel, that offered themselves willingly among the People.*] It seems there were some of the greatest Men in the Tribes of *Naphtali* and *Zebulun*, who, of their own accord, hazarded their Lives, among the common People, in this Service: Towards whom she expresses a singular Affection; and with the Praises of God, mixes the Commendation of those who were his Instruments in this Deliverance.

Bless ye the LORD.] This is added like a Prophetess, who, when she commends the most deserving Men, carries their Thoughts up to GOD, who gave them that Courage and good Success. *Abarbinel* had a Conceit came into his Head, as he tells us, when he was commenting on these Words, that by *Chokkee Israel* (which *Kimchi* interprets as we do, *the great Men of Israel*) are meant the *Scribes*, whose Office it was to register all notable Passages, particularly the Causes of Wars, and their Events; whom *Deborah* exhorts to bless the LORD, and when they wrote the History of this War, to ascribe the Success to the divine Favour. But it is not likely they had such *Scribes* in these Ages, as it's likely they had in future Times; much less such Plenty of them now in these confused Days, that *Deborah* should make a particular Address to them to do their Duty.

Ver. 10. *Speak.*] i. e. Give Thanks to GOD.

Ye that ride on white Asses.] She calls upon such Men as the Governors before mentioned, to proclaim aloud the Praises of GOD. There were no Horses in *Judæa*, but what were brought out of other Countries, so that the greatest Persons rode on Asses, as appears by the Scripture Story; but in this Country they were commonly of a red Colour, (whence an Ass hath the Name of *Chamor*, as *Bochart* observes, Lib. II. *Hieroz.* Cap. 12.) and therefore

white Asses, (or, as he translates this Word, *whitish*, or that were of a Colour inclining to white) were highly esteemed for their Rarity, and used only by honourable Persons; who could not appear in any Splendor during their Servitude under *Jabin*, but now were restored to their Dignity; for which she would have them praise the LORD.

Ye that sit in Judgment.] With whom she exhorts the Judges to join, who now sat in the Gates, as they were wont to do, which were not possessed by their Enemies, Ver. 8. Or perhaps this belongs to the foregoing Clause, it being probable that these Judges rode about the Country on white Asses to do Justice. See upon x. 4.

And walked by the Way.] All the Merchants, who now travelled safely about their Business, which they durst not do before this Deliverance, Ver. 6. for which therefore they were bound to praise the LORD.

Ver. 11. *They that are delivered from the Noise of Archers in the Places of drawing Water.*] Together with the Princes, Judges, and Merchants, she would have the Shepherds praise the LORD, every time they came to water their Flocks; remembering how they were disturbed formerly by the Archers, that lurked in Woods or Thickets, and shot whole Quivers of Arrows at them and at their Cattle, which now they brought safely to the Springs of Water.

There shall they rehearse the righteous Acts of the LORD.] Who had taken a just Vengeance on their Oppressors, and most graciously delivered them from their Tyranny; for *Righteousness* frequently signifies the great Goodness of GOD.

Even the righteous Acts towards the Inhabitants of his Villages in Israel.] She would have the meanest Peasants (as we speak) bear them Company in the Praises of GOD; for now they lived as quietly in their open Villages, as if they had been in the strongest Cities.

Then shall the People of the LORD go down to the Gates.] She sums up all in these Words; that the whole Country was bound to praise the LORD, who had given the Law its free Course; every Man having Liberty to go down safely to the Gate of his own City, where Judgment was administered.

Ver. 12. *Awake, awake, Deborah; awake, awake, utter a Song.*] Having called upon all others to praise the LORD, she now excites herself, with the most earnest and zealous Affection (expressed by the Repetition of the same Thing four Times) to celebrate his wonderful Works, by composing a Song in his Praise.

Arise, Barak, and lead thy Captivity captive, thou Son of Abinoam.] She calls upon *Barak* to go in Triumph, carrying (as the Manner was in antient Times) his principal Captives and Spoils along with him unto the House of GOD: For one cannot think she meant merely a secular pompous Show; since the *Romans* themselves in their Triumphs marched to the *Capitol*, and there offered Sacrifice to *Jupiter*. Some ask what Captives he had to lead, when the whole Army of *Sisera* was cut off? iv. 16. To which the Answer is easy, That when *Barak*, after he had

had routed their Army, pursued his Victory as far as *Harosheth*, he brought several Persons, and perhaps of the best Quality, Captive with him, out of that Country.

Ver. 13. *Then he made him that remaineth have Dominion over the Nobles among the People.*] Or, *then he shall make him that remaineth, &c.* that is, when *Barak* triumphed, that small Remnant of *Israel* (as the best of the *Jews* interpret *him that remaineth*) who were not utterly dispirited by the Oppression of *Jabin*, who had some Courage left in them, triumphed together with him over the Nobles of *Canaan*.

The LORD made me have Dominion over the Mighty.] She, who was but a weak Woman, triumphed also over the most powerful Enemies.

Ver. 14. *Out of Ephraim was there a Root of them against Amalek.*] Now she makes a Catalogue of those who any way assisted in this War, as *Homer* doth of those People who equipped Ships for the War against *Troy*: And I find no Sense of these Words so plain, as this; that the *Amalekites* coming to assist *Sisera*, as they had done the *Moabites*, (iii. 13.) a small Party of the *Ephraimites* (called here a *Root*) opposed their Passage, and hindered them from joining their Forces with the *Canaanites*. *Peter Martyr* by a *Root* understands a great Captain among them, as in *Isa.* xi. 10, the Word is thought to be used. But a most learned Friend of mine, *Dr. Alix*, admonishes me, that *Amalek* doth not only signify the People descended from *Amalek*, but a Mountain in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, mentioned xii. 15. And if we understand it so in this Place, it makes this clear Sense far easier and more natural than the other, *out of Ephraim was their Beginning*, (so the Word *Root* may be interpreted) *about Amalek*. That is, the *Ephraimites*, who came to the Assistance of *Barak*, began their Listing of Men near to this Mountain. And so the Particle *beth* (I observed upon *Josh.* x. 10.) signifies as well *near* or *about*, as *in* or *against*.

After thee, Benjamin, among thy People.] Following the Example of the Tribe of *Benjamin*; who seem to have all of them engaged in this Quarrel, with whom a few of the *Ephraimites* joined.

Out of Machir.] An eminent Family in *Manasseh*; which is put here for all that Tribe on the other side *Jordan*, where *Machir* was settled, *Numb.* xxxii. 39. *Josh.* xiii. 31. Which made their Zeal the more remarkable, in coming so far to the Aid of their Brethren; when they heard they were engaged in this Enterprize.

Came down Governors.] Some of the principal Persons of that Country; who, no doubt, had their Followers, that accompanied them in this Expedition.

And out of Zebulun they that handle the Pen of the ready Writer.] They were nearer to *Mount Tabor*, than any of the forenamed; but are therefore highly commended, that tho' they were better skilled in Books than in Arms, yet offered their Service to *Barak* on this Occasion: For *Scribes* in Scripture signify Men of Letters, that studied the Law, and expounded it.

Ver. 15. *And the Princes of Issachar were with Deborah.*] Came and offered their Service, when they heard that *Barak*, by her Order, had summoned their Neighbours *Zebulun* and *Naphtali* to come to him, iv. 10.

Even Issachar.] And the People of that Tribe followed the Example of their Princes.

And also Barak.] The Hebrew *chen* (translated here and also) signifies, *as*, or *like unto*; that is, they were as forward as *Barak* to march into the Field, tho' they had no Summons.

He was sent on Foot into the Valley.] That is, when he was sent down from *Mount Tabor*, by the Order of *Deborah* (iv. 14.) to fall upon *Sisera* in the Valley; whither he went on Foot, against his Chariots and Horsemen: Or, he went with his *Footmen* (as the *LXX.* translate it) and engaged that vast Number of Chariots, which were of greatest Use in the Valley.

For the Divisions of Reuben there were great Thoughts of Heart.] But the *Reubenites* were so divided in their Counsels, that they staid at home (as if they were separated from their Brethren in their Affections, as they were in their Situation, beyond *Jordan*) which begat many sad Thoughts in the Hearts of the rest of the *Israelites*; who could not understand the Reason of it.

Ver. 16. *Why abodest thou among the Sheep-folds, to hear the Bleatings of the Flocks?*] It was a shameful and an unaccountable Thing, that they should wholly mind their private Business (which was feeding Cattle, *Numb.* xxxii. 1.) and neglect the Publick Good.

For the Divisions of Reuben, there were great Searchings of Hearts.] And therefore she could not sufficiently bewail it; which she doth, by repeating what a great Trouble it was to all their Brethren; who were not able to discover the Reason, and give any Account of their being no more concerned than their Beasts, for their common Religion and Liberties.

Ver. 17. *Gilead abode beyond Jordan.*] She complains also of the *Gileadites*, who were Men of Valour; and notwithstanding sat still, and would not step over *Jordan* to help their Brethren. Under the Name of *Gilead*, are comprehended the *Gadites*, who had half of *Gilead* (*Josh.* xiii.) as the other half was given to the Children of *Machir*. Who did come to the Aid of their Brethren; at least their Governors engaged with them, ver. 14. Which hath moved some to read these Words interrogatively, *Did Gilead abide beyond Jordan?* as if she still upbraided the *Reubenites*; who had not this to alledge for themselves, that they were far off, beyond *Jordan*; for so were the *Gileadites* (that is, those descended from *Machir*) who they suppose comprehend the rest; and yet the best and most worthy of them, came to join with their Brethren, in the common Cause of the Nation.

And why did Dan remain in Ships?] She reproves this Tribe, which was near the Sea, (the famous Port of *Joppa* belonging to it) that they minded nothing but their Merchandize; while their Brethren hazarded their Lives in the Field.

After

Asher continued on the Sea-shore.] This Tribe also bordered upon the *Mediterranean*; *Tyre* and *Sydon* being Part of their Portion. Which they did not possess, yet no doubt they held several other lesser Places upon that Sea; from which they would not stir in this common Danger.

And abode in his Breaches.] Or, *in his Creeks*, as it is in the Margin; and as the LXX take it, who expound the Hebrew Word *Miphratim* (*Fractures*) by *διεξόδους* *Out-lets*, or small Havens; where Vessels lay, to go out to Sea. Some take the Words to signify, that they were busy in repairing the Breaches made in their walled Towns, by Length of Time, or other ways.

Ver. 18. *Zebulun and Naphtali were a People that jeoparded their Lives unto the Death.]* They were the only People (which was much for their Honour) who unanimously despised Life, in Comparison with the Liberty of their Country and Religion. For the Hebrew Word *Charaph* doth not signify merely to expose one's self to Danger; but to expose one's self to Reproach, as we observe in the Margin of our Bibles: And here denotes that they made no Account of their Lives, &c.

In the High Places of the Field.] They went down from Mount *Tabor* (where they were drawn up in a large Plain, as I observed on iv. 6.) with a Resolution to conquer or die.

It is observable, that in this Narration, there is not a Word said of *Judah*, or *Simeon*, or *Gad*, (unless comprehended under *Gilead*, as I said before) and that as *Reuben*, *Dan*, and *Asher* are taxed for their cowardly Carelessness in this Case, so *Ephraim*, *Benjamin*, Part of *Manasseh*, and *Issachar* did afford some Assistance; but nothing comparable to what *Zebulun* and *Naphtali* did; who, as one Man, engaged to hazard their Lives and Fortunes (as we now speak) for the Regaining of their Liberty; which was the more highly commendable, because they were but an Handful of Men, when they first engaged, in Comparison with the vast Army which they undertook to assault.

Ver. 19. *The Kings came and fought.]* When the *Israelites* conquered *Canaan*, *Hazor* had several Kingdoms subject to it, or depending on it, *Josh. xi. 10.* And now, it is likely, there were divers Kings, who were, at least, *Jabin's* Confederates; and came to join their Forces with his, to reduce the *Israelites* to his Obedience.

Then fought the Kings of Canaan in Taanach by the Waters of Megiddo.] These were two Cities belonging to the *Manassites*; but in the Tribe of *Issachar*, *Josh. xvii. 11.* Between which, as *Rasi* understands it, the Army of *Sisera* lay; reaching from *Taanach* to *Megiddo*; by which the River *Kishon* ran.

They took no Gain of Money.] The simple Sense seems to be, that they were Kings of such Bravery, as fought not for Money, but for Glory and Dominion; so *Rasi* and *Ralbag* among the *Jews* understand it: They fought not for Pay, but came *gratis* (as we speak) to the Assistance of *Jabin*. But the *Vulgar* takes it otherwise; they got nothing but Blows, no Spoil or Prey at all, as they expected. And *Kimchi* still much

differently (which the Words will bear) they came so enraged against the *Israelites*, that they would have spared no Man's Life, tho' he offered great Sums of Money for his Redemption; because they thirsted only after their Blood.

Ver. 20. *They fought from Heaven.]* But, on the other side, God fought for the *Israelites*, by sending Thunder and Lightning, and Hailstones from Heaven upon the *Canaanites* (as he did in the Days of *Joshua*) and, perhaps, as *P. Martyr* conjectures, raising a great Dust, which a stormy Wind blew so violently into their Eyes, that they could not see. As *Livy* saith it fell out to the *Romans*, in the great Battle at *Cannæ*.

The Stars in their Courses fought against Sisera.] Some take these Words literally, and render the Words, *not in their Courses, but in their Exaltations*, i. e. with all their Power and strongest Influences: Whence the Saying of *Rasi*, on this Place, *the Head, or Beginning of the Stars is in Heaven; but the Feet, or the End of them is upon the Earth*. That is, hither they send their Influences. But others think these Words signify, that all this was done by the Ministry of Angels, who are here called *Stars* (as in the Book of *Job xxxvii. 7.*) because he is speaking of Heaven; from whence they came to raise this terrible Tempest, and by other Means, which we are ignorant of, to trouble the Host of *Jabin*, as they did that of *Pharaoh* in the Red-Sea: And this they did in such Rank and Order, as is observed in that Heavenly Host.

It may be also thought, that this Fight lasting till Night, the Stars may be said to fight against *Sisera*; because they shone brightly to give Light to the *Israelites*, to pursue their Victory.

Ver. 21. *The River Kishon swept them away.]* It so swelled at this Time, that tho' otherwise it was very shallow, many of them were drowned in it; being carried away with a rapid Stream; for so the Word *Jerapham* signifies, which we translate *swept them away*. It is no where else found; but frequent among *Arabick* Authors, among whom it is commonly used in this Sense; as *Bochart* shews, *Lib. I. Canaan, Cap. 16*, and 42. It is likely there was a great Flood, which was made by that sudden violent Rain, which fell in the forenamed Tempest.

That antient River, the River Kishon.] It is an Elegancy used by Orators themselves (as we find in *Cicero*) to repeat the same Words, when there is great Occasion. And here she makes an Addition to the same Word; by calling *Kishon*, that antient River; because of some other great Exploit performed there in antient Time; the Memory of which is now lost. But *Kedumim* some take to be a proper Name, and another Name of the same River *Kishon*.

O my Soul, thou hast trodden down Strength.] This is an elegant *Apostrophe* (or turning of her Speech) to herself; whose Happiness she applauds, in beholding the most powerful Enemies quite vanquished, by her Commission which she gave from God, and by her Prayers to him: For none can doubt, that she implored Help

Help from Heaven, while *Barak* fought with *Sisera*.

Ver. 22. *Then were the Horse Hoofs broken.*] They could not save themselves by Flight, their Horse Hoofs being broken in stony Places, when they ran away as fast as they were able.

By the means of their Pransings.] The more Haste they made, the worse Speed, (as the common Saying is) for the running full gallop, (so the Jews interpret the Hebrew Word *Dabar* [Pransings] to signify the swiftest Course) they trod the harder on the Ground, and were in the more Danger to break their Hoofs.

The Pransings.] The Hebrews wanting a Superlative Degree in their Language, are wont to double a Word, (as *Peter Martyr* here observes) and therefore *Pransings, Pransings*, he thinks, are not here an Ornament of Speech, but signify the most vehement Motion, when a Horse is in his full Speed.

Of the mighty ones.] Of their best and strongest Horses: For the Word *Abbirim* in Hebrew, as *Bochart* observes, signifies not only strong Bulls, but Horses also. See *Hieroicoicon*, P. I. Lib. II. Cap. 6.

Ver. 23. *Curse ye Meroz.*] Most Interpreters, both Jewish and Christian, understand by *Meroz*, a City not far from the Place where the Fight was. Which seems to be proved by the following Words, where he speaks of the *Inhabitants thereof*. But *R. Sol. Jarchi* thinks *Meroz* signifies a potent Person in those Parts, who being able to give great Assistance to *Barak*, and living near Mount *Tabor*, refused to do any thing. And this is the Opinion of the *Talmudists*, (whom *Jarchi* is wont to follow) as *Mr. Selden* shews out of the *Gemara Babylon*, Lib. I. de *Synedriis*, Cap. 6. p. 123, &c. where they fancy that this great Man was excommunicated by *Deborah*, with all his Adherents; and hence they fetch the Ground and Original of the Excommunication in use among them: Which is an idle Conceit; there being no such thing as Excommunication practised among them, till they had quite lost their Civil Government, and it was in the Hands of the Heathen.

Saith the Angel of the LORD.] She would not have it thought that this Curse proceeded from her Anger, but from the Authority of God, who, by his Angel, which spake to her, denounced it against *Meroz*. And who should this Angel be, but the Captain of the LORD's Host, mentioned *Josh. v. 14*. See there.

Curse ye bitterly the Inhabitants thereof.] They that take *Meroz* for a Person, by *Inhabitants* understand those that dwelt near him, and were his Dependants or Associates; which is very forced.

Because they came not to the Help of the LORD.] The Battle was the LORD's, as the Scripture elsewhere speaks, and therefore they that refused to engage in it, refused to maintain his Cause: And the People of this Place are so heavily cursed, when all others that came not in to help their Brethren, are only discommended; because they lived so near, that they might easily have joined their Forces with them,

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whereas some others lived a great Way off, which might something excuse them.

To the Help of the LORD against the Mighty.] According to this Translation of the last Word, she means their most powerful Enemies; but the Hebrew may as well be translated *with the Mighty*; that is, with other valiant Men, who freely offered their Service in this Enterprize. This aggravated their Guilt, that when they had such noble Examples of Zeal from others, who were less able to help, they would afford no Assistance.

Ver. 24. *Blessed above Women shall Jael the Wife of Heber the Kenite be.*] On the other side she desires *Jael* may be ever praised; or rather, foretells she shall always continue famous, and her Husband too, in future Generations.

Blessed shall she be above Women in the Tent.] This is thought to be a wishing, or promising her all Happiness in her Domestick Affairs. But *P. Martyr* thinks it may be interpreted, *Blessed shall she be for what she did in her Tent*. Which was no less glorious, than what others did in the Field.

Ver. 25. *He asked Water, and she brought him Milk.*] Her Prudence is first commended, in treating him with great Respect, that he might entertain no Suspicion of Danger.

She brought forth Butter.] Milk from which the Cream (of which Butter is made) was not separated.

In a lordly Dish.] The Hebrew Word *Sepheh* (which we translate *Dish*) is no where else found, but in the Story of *Gideon* in the next Chapter, vi. 38. where we translate it *a Bowl*. From whence *Bochart* rightly concludes, it signifies a large and wide Vessel, (*P. I. Hieroz. Lib. II. Cap. 49.*) which explains the Word *Lordly* or *Princely*; which doth not signify that she had any Gold or Silver Vessel in her Tent, (which was not agreeable to their Manner of living) but that she brought him Milk in the best Vessel she had, and that very capacious: For out of such great Men were wont to drink, as *Peter Martyr* observes out of *Cicero* against *M. Antony*.

Ver. 26. *She put her Hand to the Nail.*] Next her Courage and Fortitude is celebrated: And by *Hand* is to be understood her Left, wherewith she held the Nail, as with her Right Hand the Hammer.

And her Right Hand to the Workman's Hammer.] A lively Description how she went about this Work; just as if she had been fastening her Tent.

And with her Hammer she smote Sisera.] The Hebrew Word *balam*, which we translate *smote*, signifies such a Blow as makes a Contusion.

She smote off his Head.] The Word *Machak*, which is commonly translated *cut off*, cannot have that Signification here; because there is not the least Indication in this Story of her cutting off his Head from the Body, but only of striking it through, as here it must be understood.

When she had pierced and stricken through his Temples.] Here are two Words more, *Machatz* and *Chalaph*, signifying penetrating and boring quite through. And the Place is specified where

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his

his Head was perforated, which was in his Temples, the softest Part of it, which gave the easiest Entrance to the Nail.

Ver. 27. *At her Feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down.*] In the Hebrew, *between her Feet*; &c. which some of the Talmudists have abused to a lewd Sense; justly censured by Kimchi: Who observes, that this is according to the Style of the Hebrew Language, which reduplicates Words, that they may more strongly affirm what is said; and these Words, *he bowed, he fell*, signify (he thinks) such a Fall that he never rose up again. But taking all these Expressions together, (*he bowed, he fell, he lay down*) they seem to me to import, that at the first Stroke, he started and lifted up his Body; but being very much stunned, he soon laid down again.

At her Feet he bowed, he fell.] Then I suppose she repeated her Stroke, which perfectly disabled him to move.

Where he bowed, there he fell down dead.] And at the third Stroke, it is likely, she fastened his Head to the Ground. But this Repetition doth not certainly argue that she gave so many Blows; (tho' it may pass for a probable Conjecture) for it is an usual Elegancy in such Composes, wherein she intended to set out this Fact of *Jael's* with the highest Encomiums. Some may fancy indeed, that it deserved Reprehension, rather than Commendation, upon many Accounts; being a Breach of the Laws of Hospitality, and of the Peace which was between her Family and *Jabin*, &c. But this Fact is not to be measured by the common Rules which are to govern us, it being an extraordinary, heroick, and divine Work, unto which she was excited by God; whose People *Jabin* oppressed with a cruel Servitude, from which God ordered *Barak* to be their Deliverer; who, having defeated all his Forces in a miraculous Manner, *Jael* understood there was a Divine Hand in this Victory, and was moved by the same Spirit which stirred up *Deborah* and *Barak*, to help, by this Act, to compleat their shameful Overthrow. For nothing could be more dishonourable, than for a great Captain to fall thus by the Hand of a Woman.

Ver. 28. *The Mother of Sisera looked out at a Window.*] Was in earnest Longings and Expectations to see him return victorious.

And cried through the Lattices.] Either Fear of some Miscarriage, or impatient Desire, made her cry out with a lamentable Voice; as the Word *Jabab* in the Hebrew signifies.

Why is his Chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the Wheels of his Chariot?] Having such numerous Forces, they promised themselves an easy and speedy Victory over a Handful of the *Israelites*; and therefore wondered what retarded his coming back, with all his Chariots, in Triumph.

Ver. 29. *Her wise Ladies answered her.*] The Vulgar takes the Hebrew Words to signify, *one of the wisest of his Wives* (who was not so apt to despair as his Mother) replied to her. For it is well observed by Terence, in his *Adelphi*, (as *Pet. Martyr* here notes) *Multò satius est, ea*

evenire nobis quæ de absentibus suspicantur uxores, quàm ea quæ parentes. It is much better that those Things should happen to their absent Husbands, which their Wives suspect, than those which their Parents fear. But I see no Reason to depart from our Translation, which is the same with the LXX, *οἱ σοφοὶ ἀέχουσι*, the prudent noble Women that attended her, &c.

Yea, she returned Answer to herself.] Upon better Consideration, her Hopes exceeded her Fears.

Ver. 30. *Have they not sped?*] She did not think it possible they should miscarry.

Have they not divided the Prey?] She was willing to be confident they had got the Victory; and therefore imputed their Stay to the Time that must needs be taken up in making an equal Division of the Spoil. For those Days were not like to ours, wherein every Man keeps to himself what he can lay his Hands upon; but after the Battle, they were obliged to bring all that they had gotten to the General of the Army; who considered every Man's Quality and Desert, and accordingly distributed the Prey among them.

To every Man a Damsel or two.] Young Virgins are by all Historians and Poets, reckoned as a principal Part of the Soldiers Prey. And she puts here an unusual Word for a *Damsel*, which is *Racham*; for it properly signifies a *Womb*, and seems here to be spoken by Way of Contempt, as if they were good for nothing but to serve their filthy Appetites.

To Sisera a Prey of divers Colours, a Prey of divers Colours of Needlework, of divers Colours of Needlework on both Sides.] These were the richest Part of the Spoil, being highly esteemed by all People, as *Pliny* observes, *Lib. VIII. Cap. 48.* where he mentions great Variety of them both in his own, and in antient Time: For he takes Notice, that *Homer* mentions *Pictas Vestes*, as he calls them, *Painted Garments*, which shined with Flowers and Trees in beautiful Colours; which the *Phrygians* afterwards wrought with Needles; and *Attalus* invented the interweaving Gold in them: But for divers coloured Garments, *Babylon* was above all Places famous; from whence they had the Name of *Babylonish Garments*, which were much valued even in those early Times, as appears by the Story of *Achan*, *Josh. vii. 21.* and they were of such account in After-times, that every one was not permitted to wear them, but only the greater Sort of Persons, (as *Pet. Martyr* observes out of the *Roman Laws*) which may be the Reason that here they are appropriated to *Sisera*, as his Part of the Spoil.

Meet for the Necks of them that take the Spoil.] That is, of the chief Commanders, to whom the Spoil, as I said, was brought to be divided. In the Hebrew the Words are, *for the Necks of the Spoil*; which *Kimchi* expounds, *the Head of the Prey*. As if she had said, These are to be put in the Head of the Prey; and therefore fit to be given only to the General of the Army.

Ver. 31. *So let all thy Enemies perish, O Lord.*] From hence she takes Occasion to convert

convert her Speech to God, beseeching him, that all his Enemies may be thus disappointed of their vain Hopes.

But let all them that love him, be as the Sun when he goeth forth in his Might.] Increase in Power and Force, as the Sun doth from the Time of its Rising, till it come to its Meridian Height.

And the Land had Rest forty Years.] These forty Years are to be computed from the Time of Ehud, as our great Primate thinks, who thus translates these Words, The Land rested in the fortieth Year, after the former Rest which was restored to it by Ehud. See him ad M. A. 2719. But it is far more reasonable to compute them from the Conquest of Jabin by the Northern Tribes; after which, the whole Country lived in Peace for the Space of forty Years, till the Midianites, as it follows, sorely oppressed them.

I conclude this Chapter, as *Conradus Pellicanus* doth; *Let some Homer or Virgil go now, and compare his Poetry, if he be able, with the Song of this Woman. And if there be any one that excels in Eloquence and Learning, and hath more Leisure than I, celebrate the Praises and Learning of this Panegyrick more copiously.*

C H A P. VI.

Ver. 1. *AND the Children of Israel did Evil in the Sight of the LORD.] After the Death of Deborah and Barak (who kept them, I suppose, in the true Religion) they relapsed to Idolatry.*

And the LORD delivered them into the Hand of Midian seven Years.] Because it is not said, That the Anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, (as in Chap. ii. 14. iii. 8, &c.) nor that he sold them into the Hand of Midian, (which is the Expression, iv. 2. and other Places) Peter Martyr thinks they were not altogether so bad as they had been formerly; and therefore God was pleased to shorten the Tyranny of the Midianites over them; who being their old Enemies, as they came through the Wilderness, and having been, in a Manner, utterly destroyed by the Israelites, (Numb. xxxi.) were very much disposed to take a sharp Revenge: For that those Midianites who were Neighbours to Moab, are here meant, is evident from their Situation, which was beyond Jordan, (vii. 24, 25. viii. 4.) and by the People that joined with them, who were the Children of the East, Ver. 3. whereas the other Midianites, where Jethro lived, were in the South, near the Red Sea. Some fancy, indeed, that the Midianites, Neighbours to Moab, being cut off by Moses, there was no such Nation. But it must be considered, that some of them saved themselves by Flight into other Countries, and, after the Israelites were settled in Canaan, returned again; and, in near two hundred Years time, may well be thought to have repeopled their Country, especially by the Help of other People, who came, it is likely, and planted among them; and being seated in the same Country, are all called Midianites.

Ver. 2. *And the Hand of Midian prevailed against Israel.] They brought the Israelites in Subjection to them, and were the fourth Nation that oppressed them, after the Mesopotamians, Moabites, and Canaanites.*

And because of the Midianites, the Children of Israel made them Dens that are in the Mountains, and Caves, and strong Holds.] They betook themselves to these Places for Safety; for, I suppose, they did not now make them, but made them their Retreat. And by the first Word Minharoth, is meant those hollow Places in the Rocks upon the Mountains, where Men might hide themselves, and make them their Habitation; there being Cracks and Holes in them here and there, to let in Light, as the Hebrew Word signifies. And the second Word Maharoth denotes such Caves as were in the Fields, made either by Nature, or by Art and Labour; which being dark, were fit only to hide their Goods and Provision in them. And the third Word Mitzaroth signifies such Fortresses, as secured themselves, and Families, and Cattle, and all they could carry thither. But this shews their Condition was very lamentable, in that they were driven from their Houses in the Villages, and Cities too; at least the Richest of them durst not trust themselves there, but fled to strong Holds for Safety.

Ver. 3. *And so it was, that when Israel had sown.] They did not disturb them in Seed-time, but let them be quiet till they had ploughed and sowed their Land.*

Then the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the Children of the East.] This shews, that some of the same People joined with the Midianites, that did formerly with the Moabites, when they oppressed Israel, iii. 13. For by the Children of the East, are meant, some of the People of Arabia, as Procopius notes, who observes Josephus to be of the same Mind: For Arabia lay East of Egypt, where the Israelites learnt to speak in this Manner.

Even they came up against them.] Entered the Land of Israel with such Armies as might destroy the Fruits of the Earth; as it follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 4. *And they encamped against them.] The Vulgar translate it, They pitched their Tents among them; which signifies them to have been an Arabian People, or such as lived after their Manner.*

And destroyed the Increase of the Earth.] Having formed a Camp, they sent out Parties from thence well armed, to destroy all the Corn, and the rest of the Fruits of the Earth.

Until thou come unto Gaza.] That is, they made an universal Devastation from one End of the Country to the other; for they came from the East, and destroyed all till they came to the Western Coast, where Gaza was.

And left no Sustenance for Israel.] Whom they intended to famish.

Neither Sheep, nor Ox, nor Ass.] Their Camels, and other Cattle, which they brought along with them, having eaten up all; for they were so numerous, as we are told in the following Verse, that they overspread the whole Country

Ver. 5. *For they came up with their Cattle.]* Not merely an Army of Men, but of Cattle of all Sorts, came on purpose to make this Destruction.

And their Tents.] With their whole Families, that they might be able to consume the more.

And they came up as Grasshoppers for Multitude.] Or, as *Locusts*, (as the Word *Arba* is commonly translated) which have their very Name from the vast Numbers wherein they were wont to come, and were most devouring Creatures.

For both they and their Camels were without Number.] No Country more abounded with Camels than *Midian* (as I observed before out of *Bochart* his *Hieroicoicon*, P. I. Lib. II. Cap. 2.) and they are only peculiarly mentioned, because the *Midianites* were more famous for them, than for Horses, or other Beasts.

And they entered into the Land to destroy it.] Their very Design was to depopulate the Country by this Means.

Ver. 6. *And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites.]* For the Fruits of their Land being thus destroyed, their Money was drained from them to purchase Corn from other Countries.

And the Children of Israel cried unto the LORD.] Who never failed to help them, when they truly turned to him.

Ver. 7. *And it came to pass, when the Children of Israel cried unto the LORD, because of the Midianites.]* Though the Poverty which pinched them, was that which moved them to cry unto God for Relief, yet he was so gracious as to send one to make them sensible of their Sin.

Ver. 8. *That the LORD sent a Prophet unto the Children of Israel.]* Whom the *Jews* fancy to have been *Phineas*, which is not probable, Men not commonly then living to the Age of two hundred Years, which he must be of, and more, if he were the Prophet now sent to them. It is far more likely, that God still continued other Prophets among them, beside the High-Priest, to put them in mind of their Duty, and to call them to Repentance when they forsook him. And it appears by the foregoing Story, that there was a Woman who had the Spirit of Prophecy; which shews that, at least, upon special Occasions, he raised up such Persons among them.

Which said unto them.] At some great Festival, it is likely, when they were all assembled.

Thus saith the LORD God of Israel.] This is the Style in which the Prophets commonly spake.

I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the House of Bondage.] All the Prophets put them in Mind of this, as the greatest Obligation upon them, to be entirely devoted to God's Service. See *Exod.* xix. 4, 5, 6. where God himself tells them for what Purpose he had delivered them from that Bondage. And see *Josh.* xxiv. 5, 6.

Ver. 9. *And I delivered you out of the Hand of the Egyptians.]* Who, when they pursued them, to bring them back into Slavery, were all drowned in the Red Sea.

And out of the Hand of all that oppressed you.] That endeavoured to oppress them; such as the *Amalekites*, *Sibon*, and *Og*, who opposed their Passage to *Canaan*.

And drove them out from before you, and gave you their Land.] By the Hand of *Joshua*, who settled them in the Land which God promised to them. All this is said, to put them in mind how faithfully God had performed his Covenant with them, and to upbraid them with their own Infidelity.

Ver. 10. *And I said unto you, I am the LORD your God.]* *Exod.* xx. 1. *Deut.* v. 6. vi. 4.

Fear not the Gods of the Amorites, in whose Land ye dwell.] Do not worship them, nor imagine they can do you any Harm, *Deut.* vii. 12, 13, 14. *Josh.* xxiv. 14, 15.

But ye have not obeyed my Voice.] Which was the Cause of all the Evil that had befallen them, and would still continue, if they did not now hearken unto him, as they desired him to hear their Cry. This, no doubt, the Prophet pressed upon them, in more Words than are here set down, these being only the Heads of his Speech.

Ver. 11. *And there came an Angel of the LORD.]* The *Israelites* laid the Application of the Prophet's Speech to their Heart (it is to be supposed) and began to reform their Ways, which moved him to send an Angel to appoint them a Deliverer; for he is called, *An Angel of the LORD*, both here and Verse 12, 20, 21, 22.

And sat under an Oak.] In a Grove of Trees (as *Arias Montanus* understands it) where there was one great well-spread Oak, in which there was a Seat.

Which was in Ophrah.] The City where *Gideon* was born and lived, viii. 27.

That pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite.] This is added to shew what *Ophrah* he means; for there was another in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, *Josh.* xviii. 23. whereas the Family of *Abiezer* belonging to the Tribe of *Manasseh*, *Josh.* xvii. 2.

And his Son Gideon threshed Wheat.] The Hebrew *Chabat*, in this Place, signifies to thresh out with a Stick or Rock, as *Kimchi* here observes. And so the LXX. παῖδιζων. But the common Way of threshing Corn out of the Ear, was by treading it with Oxen, which they called *Dash*, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 20. This *Gideon* did not use, partly for Privacy, but chiefly because he had but a little to beat out.

By the Wine Press.] Where none would suspect his threshing of Corn.

To hide it from the Midianites.] Who watched narrowly all the Threshing-floors of the *Israelites*, who might have bought Sheaves of their Neighbours, or, perhaps, sown and reaped a little Corn, in some private fenced Places, where the Cattle of the *Midianites* did not come to eat it up.

Ver. 12. *And the Angel of the LORD appeared unto him.]* *Gideon*, I suppose, turning his Face that Way, beheld him sitting under the Oak.

And said unto him, The LORD is with thee.] He did not take him to be one of the *Midianites*,

Midianites, by his Posture, and Manner of Appearance, and was made more certain of it by this Salutation. Wherein he doth not pray God to be with him, but declares him to be with him (as appears by *Gideon's* Answer) that is, to assist him to be the Deliverance of his People. The *Targum* here translates it, *The WORD of the LORD is thy Help*. Whereby it appears, the antient *Jews* did not look upon this Angel merely as an heavenly Messenger sent from God, but as the LORD himself, as he is called, *Ver.* 14, 16, 23, 24, 25, 27. Which is confirmed by the following Verse, as the same *Targum* translates it.

Thou mighty Man of Valour.] He was naturally courageous, but made more so, by a divine Inspiration, and yet did not disdain to mind Husbandry, as the greatest Persons did in antient Time. Inasmuch that *Pliny* saith, The Earth brought forth its Fruit more happily and abundantly, *cum Imperatorum clarissimorum manibus tractaretur*, when it was cultivated by the Hands of the most famous Commanders: For they had more Skill and Industry in their Management, than the ordinary People.

Ver. 13. *And Gideon said unto him, O my Lord.*] The Hebrew Word *bi* (which we translate, O, or, I beseech thee) may literally be translated, *with me*; by way of Interrogation: As much as to say, *How can that be?* It appears by the Word *Adonai* (Lord) which is used to all great Men, that he did not yet think him to be an Angel, but some Person of extraordinary Quality, who wished well to the *Israelites*.

If the LORD be with us, Why then is all this befallen us? And where are all the Miracles which our Fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? &c.] He thought their present Condition sufficiently shewed, that their whole Nation was forsaken by God; who had thrown them into that Slavery, out of which he delivered their Fathers, and did not appear, by any miraculous Works, to be present among them as he was in Egypt, but left them to be devoured by the *Midianites*.

Here the *Targum* makes *Gideon's* Answer to have been this, *Is the SCHECHINAH of the LORD our Help? Whence then hath all this happened unto us?* Which Paraphrase shews that they took the WORD of the LORD to be the same with the SCHECHINAH of the LORD, who had most gloriously appeared for their Help. See *Ver.* 16. and *Josh.* xiv. 12.

Ver. 14. *And the LORD looked upon him.*] This shews it was not a mere Angel, but the same *Jehovah*, who appeared to *Joshua* (v. 13, 14.) in the Likeness of an Angel, and now cast a gracious Aspect upon him: For to have Respect unto a Man, or unto his Sacrifice, is graciously to accept him, and to be favourable to him; as the LORD now declared he was, by his very Countenance, which had great Kindness in it.

And said, Go in this thy Might.] This seems to intimate that *Gideon* was immediately inspired with a great Courage, by that gracious Aspect of the LORD upon him.

And thou shalt save Israel from the Hand of the Midianites.] See these Wonders renewed, which appeared in the Deliverance of their Fathers out of Egypt, of which *Gideon* said there was no Token; *Ver.* 13.

Have not I sent thee?] Is not this a sufficient Authority; that thou hast a Commission from God? Great Care is taken throughout all this Book, to shew that the Judges all acted by a divine Warrant.

Ver. 15. *And he said unto him, O my LORD.*] Still he took him to be only some extraordinary Man.

Wherewith shall I save Israel?] He doth not reject the Commission, but modestly declines it (as *Theodoret* observes) considering his own Meanness, in Comparison with many others.

Behold, my Family is poor in Manasseh.] And consequently of little Power to raise Forces, to oppose so potent an Enemy: The Word we translate, *my Family*, is in Hebrew, *my Thousand*: For the *Israelites* were distributed, by *Jethro's* Advice, into Hundreds and Thousands; and the Thousand to which *Gideon* belonged, was the meanest of all the rest in that Tribe. The *Jews* will have it, that *Gideon* was the *Chiliarch*, or chief Commander of this Thousand; others say, his Father *Joash*, who, it appears by the Story, was a considerable Person; but it is uncertain whether he had such a Government.

And I am the least in my Father's House.] This shews that *Gideon* had no such Command as the *Jews* imagine.

Ver. 16. *And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee.*] Do not consider thy Poverty, but the Power of God, which shall accompany thee: Here the *Targum* thus paraphrases, *My Word shall be thy Help*; who was the same that appeared to *Joshua*, with a Sword in his Hand.

And thou shalt smite the Midianites as one Man.] Defeat them as easily, as if he had but one Man to deal withal.

Ver. 17. *And he said, If now I have found Grace in thy Sight.*] Am so highly favoured, as to have this Honour.

Then shew me a Sign.] He doth not so much as make a Doubt, but desire to be confirmed in his Belief.

That thou talkest with me.] That thou hast brought this Commission from God, and that I shall be able to destroy the *Midianites*. He said this (as *Conr. Pellicanus* thinks) not because his Faith wanted Confirmation, but that he might make others believe, who would require a Sign before they joined with him.

Ver. 18. *Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee.*] Stay here till I go home, and return.

And bring forth my Present.) So we rightly interpret the Hebrew Word *Mincha*; which tho' it signify a Meat Offering (as we observe in the Margin) yet there was nothing of a Sacrifice intended here, nor was *Gideon* a Priest, or this a Place of Sacrifice.

And set it before thee.] He intended to entertain him, by making a Feast for him.

And he said, I will tarry till thou come again.] It was a great Thing he was to undertake, and so God graciously condescended to give him all manner of Satisfaction about it.

Ver. 19. *And Gideon went in, and made ready a Kid, and unleavened Cakes of an Ephah of Flour.]* For Expedition sake he made such Cakes, they being soonest prepared: For it is a mere Fancy of the Jews, that this was done about the Passover in the Days of Unleavened Bread.

The Flesh he put in a Basket, and he put the Broth in a Pot; and brought it unto him under the Oak, and presented it.] Set it before him on a Table, and desired he would be pleased to eat: In which he followed the Example of Abraham and Lot, and seems to have entertained him nobly, according to the Way of Feasting in those Days; for a whole Kid (Part of which was boiled, and the other Part, perhaps, otherwise prepared) and so many Cakes, as an Ephah of Flour would make, was enough for several Guests; and therefore so much set before one Man, was to shew his great Respect to him.

Ver. 20. *And the Angel of the LORD said unto him, Take the Flesh, and the unleavened Cakes.]* He did not taste of them, intending to turn them into a Sacrifice unto God.

And lay them upon this Rock.] Which was near the Grove of Oaks, in the higher Part of the City of Ophrah, as Bertram conjectures, in his Book *de Repub. Judaica*, Chap. xv.

And pour out the Broth.] As Elijah, in after-times, bad them pour Water upon his Sacrifice.

And he did so.] He obeyed him; though it is likely he thought it strange he should command him thus to dispose of the good Cheer he had prepared for him.

Ver. 21. *Then the Angel of the LORD put forth the End of the Staff that was in his Hand.]* For he appeared, I suppose, in the Form of a Traveller, who were wont to walk with a Staff in their Hand.

And touched the Flesh, and the unleavened Cakes, and there rose up Fire out of the Rock.] He did not smite the Rock with his Staff, (by which Stroke the Fire might have been thought to be stirred up) but only gently touched the Flesh and the Cakes with it.

And consumed the Flesh and the unleavened Cakes.] Together with the Broth, that was poured on them; which was as great a Miracle (if not greater) as if Fire had come down from Heaven, as in the Sacrifices which Moses, and Elijah, and others offered: By which the Faith of Gideon was mightily strengthened, that the Miracles done in ancient Times (which he enquired after, Ver. 13.) were not ceased, and that God would be as good as his Word to him, for this was a Token of God's Acceptance of him.

And the Angel of the LORD departed out of his Sight.] Went up into Heaven, as the Chaldee Paraphrase interprets it.

Ver. 22. *And when Gideon perceived, that he was an Angel of the LORD.]* He was convinced, by this Wonder, that he was not a mere Prophet that appeared to him.

Alas, O LORD GOD, for because I have seen an Angel of the LORD Face to Face.] He speaks as a Man in a Fright, and cuts off Part of his Words; for his Meaning was, *I shall die*: Such was the Opinion of good Men in those Days, that if they saw apparently an Inhabitant of the other World, he came to call them away from this: As appears more fully in the Story of Manoah and his Wife, in the thirteenth Chapter of this Book: And this Opinion was very ancient, as may be gathered from the Words of Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 30. and they were confirmed in it, perhaps by the Words of God to Moses, Exod. xxxiii. 20.

Ver. 23. *And the LORD said unto him.]* Tho' the Angel disappeared, and nothing was to be seen, yet the Lord, who appeared in that Form to him, made him know he was still present with him, by speaking the following Words, in an audible Voice.

Peace be unto thee, fear not; thou shalt not die.] He bids him fear no Harm, but, quite contrary, expect all manner of Good, (which is comprehended in the Word *Peace*) and that in this World, where he should still continue, to work that Deliverance which he promised by him: From such Places as this the ancient Christians rightly gathered, that the Son of God appeared, upon some great Occasions, in old Time; which is not incredible, but a Matter of easy Belief, if we be persuaded that he did really appear in our Flesh, which he took of the Virgin Mary, and dwelt among us for a long Time, and then ascended in it to Heaven, where he lives for ever: For why should we think it strange, if, for a short Time, he appeared sometimes in Human Shape, as a *Prælude* to what he intended in the Fulness of Time? *Fuit sane id majus quod nobis præstitit, &c.* (as Peter Martyr speaks.) It was indeed a greater thing which he did for us at last; but he that did the greater, may well be granted to have done the less, and there is no Reason to doubt of it.

Ver. 24. *And Gideon built an Altar there unto the LORD.]* Not for Sacrifice, (which had been directly contrary to the Law of God) but as a Monument of that heavenly Vision, and of the Mercy promised to him, in that Place where he built the Altar, viz. Where the Angel stood and touched the Flesh and unleavened Cakes, and consumed them: Such an Altar the Reubenites made, Josh. xxii. 10, &c.

And called it Jehovah-Shalom.] That is, The LORD here pronounced Peace to me, Ver. 23. or (as we understand it, in the Margin) The LORD grant Peace: Which he had the greatest Reason to expect, when God had declared it, at that very Time, when he looked for Death.

Until this Day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.] It was remaining when Samuel wrote this Book.

Ver. 25. *And it came to pass the same Night.]* After the Angel's Appearance.

That the LORD said unto him.] In a Dream, it is most likely, because it was in the Night.

Take thy Father's young Bullock.] In the *Hebrew* the Words are two, *Par, Shor*, signifying a Bullock full grown; which his Father, it is probable, had fattened up for a Sacrifice to *Baal*.

Even the second Bullock.] Our Translation supposes there was but one Bullock, which he was ordered to take (because we read in the next Verse, that this alone was sacrificed); but in the *Hebrew*, and the LXX, and the *Vulgar*, (and our Margin also) the Words are, *and the second Bullock*; which was next to the first in Age.

Of seven years old.] Which was calved, as *Arias Montanus* observes, when their Oppression under the *Midianites* began; and was now ordered to be sacrificed, in Token that it should end with this Bullock's Death.

And throw down the Altar of Baal that thy Father hath.] Which was in his Ground, and built, perhaps, at his Charge; but was for publick Use, as appears from *Ver. 28*.

And cut down the Grove that is by it.] Or, rather, *upon it*; for so the *Hebrew* Word *alau* signifies; and so the LXX translate it *ἐν αὐτῷ*, upon the Altar before-mentioned. And therefore by *Ashtereb*, which we translate *Grove*, must be meant the Image in the Grove, which stood upon the Altar. And so the Word is used in other Places, *1 Kings xxiii. 6*. Which *Mr. Selden* probably conjectures was the Image of *Ashtaroah*, or *Astarte*; for she was worshipped together with *Baal*, *ii. 13*. where they are said to have worshipped *Baal* and *Ashtaroah* (for there was more than one *Astarte's*) which is the same with *iii. 7*. where it is said they worshipped *Baalim* and the Groves. See *Syntag. 2. de Diis Syris*, Cap. 2. There could be no Hope of Deliverance till Religion was reformed; with which therefore God orders him to begin.

Ver. 26. And build an Altar unto the Lord thy God, upon the Top of this Rock.] Where the Angel appeared to him; from whence *Bertram* thinks the *Israelites* learnt to sacrifice in High Places; if it were not rather a Custom derived from the *Gentiles*.

On the Top of this Rock there was a Fortress, as I take it; which it is likely had been built to secure them from the *Midianites*. For the Word for *Rock* is not the ordinary one, *viz. tzor*, or *sela*, but *maboz*; which signifies a strong Hold.

In the ordered Place.] Which *St. Hierom* took to be the Place where the Flesh and unleavened Cakes were laid in Order upon the Rock, *Ver. 20*. but it may signify, as we translate it in the Margin, *in an orderly Manner*.

And take the second Bullock, and offer a burnt Sacrifice.] If there were two Bulls which he took, it is hard to say what became of the first. *Arias Montanus* supposes it was offered for himself, and for his Family; but this *second* is only mentioned, because it was the Sacrifice that was offered for the whole Nation, to implore God's Mercy to them; for Sacrifices were a kind of Prayer and Supplication. *Gideon* was no Priest, but by God's special Order, was required to do this; which otherwise would have been a presumptuous Sin.

With the Wood of the Grove which thou shalt cut down.] This was also an extraordinary Command, whereby Things employed to Idolatry, were converted to a sacred Use. Otherwise, God had ordered them all to be utterly destroyed, *Deut. vii. 5. xii. 3*.

Ver. 27. Then Gideon took ten Men of his Servants.] In whom he could confide; and this Number was as many as was necessary, to make a Congregation for publick Worship; and was sufficient also to execute what God had commanded.

And did as the Lord had said unto him.] Broke down the Altar of *Baal*, cut down the Grove, and built an Altar unto the Lord, and offered the Burnt-Sacrifice.

And so it was, because he feared his Father's Household, and the Men of the City, that he could not do it by Day.] Without endangering a Tumult, which might have ended in a Fray.

That he did it by Night.] When he was likely to meet with no Opposition. In this he gave an early Proof of his Faith in God, for it was a bold Undertaking: But Prudence is not excluded in the Execution of the Divine Commands: Yet the greater Speed Men make, the more acceptable it is; and some think his Zeal moved him to do this, the very same Night wherein God appeared to him.

Ver. 28. And when the Men of the City rose early in the Morning.] And came to worship *Baal*, before they went about their Business.

Behold the Altar of Baal was cast down, and the Grove cut down that was by it.] They were very much surprized to see such an Alteration.

And the second Bullock was offered.] Which they knew was designed for a Sacrifice to *Baal*.

Upon the Altar that was built.] Not upon the Altar of *Baal*, which was thrown down, but on a new one, which was built in another Place; upon which the Flesh of the second Bullock was still flaming, being not quite consumed, when they came thither.

Ver. 29. And they said one to another, Who hath done this Thing?] Their Superstition made them very solicitous to find out the Author of this Impiety, as they accounted it.

And when they enquired and asked.] Here are two Words in the *Hebrew*, importing that they made a diligent Inquisition; examining many Persons what they knew of it.

They said, Gideon the Son of Joash hath done this Thing.] Who gave this Information, we are not told; nor how the Discovery was made: Perhaps, some had seen him that Morning stand by the Sacrifice; which it is likely he would not forsake, as long as he durst attend it. Or some of his Servants might let fall such Words as gave Suspicion: Or, the Altar and Image standing in *Joash* his Ground, and his Bullock being offered, they thought that none, without the Knowledge of his Family, could come to attempt it: And, besides, it is probable that *Gideon* was known to be no zealous Servant of *Baal*; and when all were so very much concerned for the demolishing of his Altar, he expressing

pressing no Concern at all, they confidently charged him with the Fact.

Ver. 30. *Then the Men of the City said to Joash, Bring out thy Son, that he may die, because he, &c.*] It seems they were all zealous Idolaters; and thought him worthy of Death who dishonoured those who were accounted Gods.

Ver. 31. *And Joash said unto all that stood against him.*] That is, against his Son; demanding to have him produced, and punished.

Will ye plead for Baal? Will ye save him?] i. e. Will you take upon you to avenge his Quarrel, and to be his Patrons? Doth it belong to you to be his Defenders and Deliverers? It seems to have been a popular Tumult, which he endeavours to repress; by representing to them, that such Crimes were not to be punished by them, but by the Magistrates of the City; and that they would bring themselves in Danger of what they intended to do to Gideon, if they did not desist; as it follows in the next Words.

He that will plead for him, let him be put to Death.] That is, Let me tell you, he that thus moves Sedition in this Cause, by my Consent, should be put to Death himself. And, it is likely, Joash was a Magistrate in the City; who terrified them by declaring what his Opinion would be, if they came to be tried for this Riot.

While it is yet Morning.] That is, immediately. For it was early in the Morning (Ver. 28.) when they came in this Manner to Joash.

If he be a God, let him plead for himself, because he hath cast down his Altar.] If the Magistrates neglected to punish the pretended Crime, Baal, he tells them, in case he were a real God, would take Care to do himself Right; and therefore they need not be so much concerned about it: And so some understand the latter Part of this Verse, *He deserves to die presently, who is an Adversary to Baal: But let the Execution be done then by Baal himself. For if he be a God, he will take Care of his own Honour; and you need not trouble yourselves about it.* It is likely Joash had been convinced by his Son, that God had given him a Commission to deliver his People; and to begin it with this Reformation. Which made him appear thus boldly in his Son's Cause; because he knew it was the Cause of God.

Ver. 32. *Therefore on that Day he called him Jerubbaal.*] In the 2 Sam. xi. 21. he is called *Jerubbesheth*; for so some called Baal, in Contempt, by the Name of *Besheth*, that is *Shame* and *Confusion*; which well expresses the Nature of such Idols.

Saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his Altar.] This is the Reason why he gave him this Name; which is as much as to say, *the Adversary of Baal*; or, *him whom Baal hath a Quarrel withal*; upon the Account of the Affront put upon him, in throwing down his Altar. The *Phœnicians* called him *Jerombalus*, as appears by *Sanchuniathon*, whom *Eusebius* often quotes, as he is translated by *Philo Byblius* into Greek: And *Porphyry* saith, he received certain Commentaries from *Jerombalus*, the Priest of the God *Jevo*. Which can

be nothing but the Books of *Moses*, which contain the Laws delivered by *Jehovah*; as *Huetius* justly observes in his *Demonstr. Evangel. Propos. 4. Cap. 2.* for the Remains which we have of his Writings, plainly taste of the Doctrine of *Moses*.

Ver. 33. *Then all the Midianites, and the Amalekites, and the Children of the East were gathered together.*] As they were wont to do every Year, to waste the Country, Ver. 3, 4, 5.

And went over.] The River *Jordan*.

And pitched in the Valley of Jezreel.] Which alarmed Gideon, and gave him Occasion to execute his Commission; it being not far from *Opbrab*; for *Jezreel* in the Tribe of *Judab* is not here meant, (mentioned *Josh. xv. 36.*) but *Jezreel* in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, or *Issachar*, which is frequently spoken of in the Book of the *Kings*, being one of the Royal Seats of the Kings of *Israel*; where there was a noble Valley, running from the East to the West, mentioned *Josh. xvii. 16. Hosea i. 5.*

Ver. 34. *But the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon.*] Or, (as the Words are in the *Hebrew*, and as the *LXX* translate it) *cloathed Gideon*: Which is a Phrase *St. Paul* uses to signify a Man is replenished with that wherewith he is said to be cloathed; or that he is fully possessed of it. So was Gideon with Courage, and all other Qualities necessary in a great Commander.

And he blew a Trumpet, and Abiezer was gathered unto him.] Came and offered their Service to fight under his Banner. This was a wonderful Change, if the City of *Opbrab*, who were lately so incensed against him, that they would have killed him for destroying their *Idol*, now not only submitted to him, but were ready to join with him against all his Enemies: But though this be not incredible, that they were converted from the Idolatrous Worship of *Baal*, when they saw no Hurt befall Gideon for throwing down his Altar, &c. yet this may be meant only of the rest of the *Abiezrites*, and especially those of his own Kindred and Family.

Ver. 35. *And he sent Messengers throughout all Manasseh, who also were gathered after him.*] That is, the rest of his Tribe; whose Hearts God moved to resort unto him.

And he sent Messengers unto Asher, and unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali.] After his own Tribe was come in, he invited these three who bordered upon the Tribe of *Manasseh* Northward, to come to his Assistance: But he did not send unto the Tribe of *Ephraim*, who were Neighbours to the *Manassites* on the South; which afterward begat a Quarrel, as we read Chap. viii.

And they came to meet them.] One of the Copies of the *LXX* refers this to Gideon, that he went up to meet those of the three Tribes before mentioned; but others refer it to them who came up to meet Gideon; and so the *Hebrew* Words seem to import. But which way soever we take it, they all joined their Forces together; and from hence *Sir J. Marsham* infers, that the Oppression fell only on this Part

of the Country; tho' the whole Story represents all the *Israelites* as in a miserable Condition, and as submitting to his Government, after he had delivered them.

Ver. 36. *And Gideon said unto God.*] In a Prayer, which, I suppose, he made unto him.

If thou wilt save Israel by my Hand, as thou hast said.] He did not doubt of God's Intentions, who had promised to be with him: For in Pursuit of his Commands he had done one great thing already, in throwing down *Baal's* Altar; and had also blown a Trumpet and lifted Soldiers; and had likewise seen wonderful Effects of God's Power, in consuming the Flesh and the Cakes that were laid upon the Rock, by Fire coming out of it: Therefore he desired only a Confirmation of his Faith; and that, perhaps, for the Sake of those who were to go with him, who might possibly be timorous: Or he might desire by some Sign to know, whether at this time he would make him victorious over the *Midianites*, or he was to wait for some other Opportunity.

Ver. 37. *Behold, I will put a Fleece of Wool in the Floor.*] Where they were wont to thresh Corn; which was done in the open Air, not in Barns, as we do now.

And if the Dew be on the Fleece only, and it be dry upon all the Earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by my Hand, as thou hast said.] He supposed that the Dew which distilled from Heaven was a divine Gift, (as the Scripture often testifies, particularly *Gen. xxviii. 28.*) which he desires might be so governed by God, that though it commonly fall every where, it might now, by his extraordinary Providence, water only his Fleece.

Ver. 38. *And it was so; for he rose up early in the Morning, and thrust the Fleece together, and wringed the Dew out of the Fleece, a Bowl full of Water.*] When there was not a Drop upon the Earth round about it. The Word *Sephel*, which here we translate *Bowl*, was used in the foregoing Chapter, *Ver. 25.* Which see.

Ver. 39. *And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine Anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once.*] Though God did not chide him for his former Desire, nor charge him with any Distrust of his Power and Will to do what he promised; yet *Gideon* was afraid lest he should be very angry at his renewing the same Request, because it looked like a Diffidence in God's Word. But if we consider, that it was for the further and fuller Satisfaction of those that were to go with him, it may be excused; and as he promises that he will ask no more Signs, so we do not find that the LORD took it ill of him that he asked this.

Let me prove thee, I pray thee, with the Fleece.] This is a bad Word, when it denotes Men's Infidelity, that no Sign will be given them; but a good one, when it signifies an humble Desire to have such a Sign granted them, as here it doth.

Let it be dry now only upon the Fleece, and upon all the Ground let there be Dew.] Upon these Words *Rabag* hath this Observation, *The former Miracle was not sufficient for his*

Conviction, because it is in the very Nature of Wool to draw Moisture to it; and therefore he desires this second Miracle, which is contrary to the first.

Ver. 40. *And God did so that Night.*] For some Dew drops in the Morning, other in the Night. And here God was pleased not in the Morning, but in that very Night when he asked this Sign, to sprinkle all the Floor with Dew, and let none fall upon the Fleece. So ready, saith *Bochartus*, is God to hear our Prayers; which his Benefits do not so much follow, as go before them, or immediately accompany them.

For it was dry upon the Fleece only, and there was Dew on all the Ground.] Not upon all the Country of *Israel*, but upon all the Floor, or the Land thereabout. By these quite contrary Signs, his Faith was fully confirmed; and perhaps there was some need of it, when he saw the Number of his Followers reduced to a small Handful of three hundred Men, *vii. 10.* There are those, who think he chose a Fleece of Wool for this Purpose, not only because it was ready at hand, but the better to express how the Earth was shorn by the *Midianites*, as the Sheep had been by him; and when he begged the Dew (a Sign of the divine Favour) might fall upon the Fleece, it was to represent the Kindness of God to him; and when he begged it might fall upon the whole Ground, it represented his Favour to all the People: And, lastly, that these two Miracles, opposite one to the other, do notably set forth the State of that Nation, who were moistened with the Dew of Heaven (the Knowledge of God) when the rest of the World were dry; and now are dry, when the rest of the Earth are filled with the Knowledge of the LORD, as the Waters cover the Sea.

C H A P. VII.

Ver. 1. **T**HEN *Jerubbaal, (who is Gideon) and all the People that were with him, rose up early.*] The very next Morning, I suppose, after the last Miracle.

And pitched beside the Well of Harod.] It is but conjectured where this Well was, *viz.* not far from Mount *Gilboa*.

So that the Host of the Midianites were on the North Side of them, by the Hill of Moreh.] The *Vulgar* takes the Word *Moreh* to signify high; and then this high Hill can be no other than the forenamed *Gilboa*. Here *Pellicanus* observes, that Prudence and diligent Forecast is to be used, even when we are under the divine Conduct; for he thinks *Gideon* acted like a skilful Commander, when he quartered his Army so, as to have the Enemy on the North of him, rather than the East or the South.

In the Valley.] Of *Jezreel*, as was said before, *vi. 33.* which had *Hermion* on the North, and *Gilboa* on the South of it.

Ver. 2. *And the LORD said unto Gideon, The People that are with thee, are too many for me to give the Midianites into their Hand.*] They were but thirty-two thousand, against an innumerable

merable Army of the Enemies, *Ver. 3, 12.* which was a vast Disproportion; and yet God would not use the Service of such a Company, lest it should obscure his Glory; as it follows in the next Words.

Lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own Hand hath saved me.] He knew their Humour, and foresaw they might be so vain, as to ascribe the Victory to their own Power and Prowess, and not to him who intended to shew to all the World it was his miraculous Work.

Ver. 3. Now therefore go to, proclaim in the Ears of the People.] According to the Command of Moses, *Deut. xx. 8.*

Whosoever is fearful and afraid.] The Word which we translate *afraid*, is in the Hebrew *Harod*: From whence some have conjectured the Well where they pitched (*Ver. 1.*) was called by the Name of *Harod*, because here a great Fear came upon most of Gideon's Army.

Let him return and depart early.] As soon as he can: Or, as a great many understand it, *make what haste he can to his Home*; it being a Metaphor, they think, from the flying of a Bird.

From Mount Gilead.] Not that Mountain which is so often mentioned in Scripture; for that was on the other Side of *Jordan*, and in the most Eastern Part of their Country, (as appears from the Story of *Jacob*, when he returned from *Padan Aram*) but another Mountain on the West Side of *Jordan*, in the Tribe of *Manasseh*: The Name of whose Grandson *Gilead* (from whom all the Tribes descended) was given, it is probable, in Memory of him, to some Mountain in this Country; which was called *Mount Gilead*; just as another Mountain in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, was called *Mount Ephraim*. This seems to me a far more rational Account of these Words, than theirs who translate them *towards Mount Gilead*, or *about it*; or devise some other such like Explication of the Particle *Min*, (which we rightly translate *from*) as may consist with their Opinion, that the Mount on the other Side *Jordan* is here intended. *Gataker* hath collected many Interpretations of this Kind in his *Cinnus*, Lib. 2. Cap. 18.

And there returned of the People twenty and two thousand.] As God thought there was too many, so they thought there were too few, to fight with such an Host as came against them: And therefore, though they were at the first forward to list themselves under *Gideon*, yet when they saw no greater Number come in, as they expected, their Hearts failed them; for they trusted not in God, but in their own Strength.

And there remained ten thousand.] Who had more Courage, and were resolved to venture their Lives in the Cause. *Rabag* thinks the greater Number that went away were Men of bad Lives, whose Consciences made them afraid; and that these who remained were better Men, which made them valiant and undaunted. And they were just the same Number that went down with *Barak* from *Mount Tabor*, in their last Deliverance, iv. 10.

Ver. 4. And the LORD said unto Gideon,

The People are yet too many.] The more valiant they were, the more they might be apt to ascribe to themselves.

Bring them down unto the Water.] Which, it is likely, ran from the Well or Fountain of *Harod*, and made a Brook.

And I will try them for thee there.] Give thee a Proof who are fit for the Service. The Hebrew Word *Tzaraph* signifies to scour, purge, and purify; as Fullers do Cloth from its Filthiness, or as Refiners do Gold and Silver from their Dross. So God intended to purge *Gideon's* Army, from all such Persons as he judged unfit for the Undertaking.

And it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.] He intended by such a Voice as now spake unto him, to declare who should go with him, and who should not.

Ver. 5. So he brought down the People unto the Water.] Where it was proper to purge them.

And the LORD said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the Water with his Tongue, as a Dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his Knees to drink.] They were thirsty, we may well suppose, by the Heat of the Weather, and by their March, which made them greedily betake themselves to the Water: Where he bid *Gideon* observe the different Postures which they used in quenching of their Thirst. The LXX here translate it *ὡς ὁς ἀν λάβη τῇ γλώσσῃ αὐτοῦ*, Who ever licketh upon the Water with his Tongue. Which is the very Word the great Philosopher uses in his *History of Animals*, Lib. 8. Cap. 6. where he saith, Those Creatures whose Teeth are continued close together, sup up Water as Horses and Oxen do; but such as he calls *καρχαρόδοντα*, that have Teeth like a Saw, do *λάπτειν*, which is of the same Signification with our English Word *lap*, and the French *laper*, as *Bochart* observes.

Ver. 6. And the Number of them that lapped, putting their Hand to their Mouth, were three hundred Men; but all the rest of the People bowed down upon their Knees to drink Water.] Some ascribe it to the Sloth and Laziness of these three hundred Men, that they would not stoop down to drink, as the rest did; others, to their Timorousness, and the great Fear they were in of being suddenly surprized by their Enemies, which is the Opinion of *Josephus* and *Theodoret*; both which great Authors think, that God chose these three hundred Men, on purpose because they were poor-spirited, that the Victory might be acknowledged to be entirely owing to himself: And *Grotius* is of this Mind, who thinks they lapped, just as the Dogs do at the River *Nile*, as they run, for fear of the Crocodiles. See *Sixtiri Amama* his *Antibarbarus*, Lib. 3. P. 385. But it is evident that all the fearful Persons were dismissed before; and it is not likely that courageous Men were lazy; therefore I take it, as others do, (particularly *Procopius Gazæus*) to be a Token of their Temperance, and of the Nobleness of their Spirit, which made them so desirous to engage the Enemy

Enemy, that they would not stay to drink ; but though they were very thirsty, contented themselves to moisten their Mouth with a little Water ; whereas the rest indulged themselves so far, as to drink their Belly full. And it is the Opinion of *Rabag*, among the *Jews*, that their lapping standing, was a Sign of their Alacrity and Fortitude. *R. Solomon*, and *Kimchi*, also think, that the rest had been Worshippers of *Baal*, and by bowing their Knees to drink, were discovered, which is a far-fetched Conceit.

Ver. 7. *And the LORD said unto Gideon, By the Three hundred Men that lapped, will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine Hand.*] It was sufficient to let all the World see, *God* saved them, and not Men, that he employed only three hundred Persons in this Service, yet it was necessary these three hundred should be Men of extraordinary Faith and Courage (such as *Gideon* had) to embolden them to this Enterprize.

And let all the other People go every Man unto his Place.] He had sent away above two Thirds of his Army before, and now of that third Part, he keeps only the thirtieth.

Ver. 8. *And the People took Victuals in their Hands.*] They that returned Home, left so much Provision, as would serve to maintain three hundred Men for some time.

And their Trumpets.] If we suppose every thousand Men to have ten Trumpeters belonging to them, it was easy to furnish three hundred Men with every one a Trumpet, which we read (*Ver. 16.*) they had, that they might, when they sounded, make a Noise, as if they were a greater Number than really they were. It is hard to say, how *Josephus* came to say, that they carried in their Hand, ἀεὶς κέρας a Ram's Horn, which they used ἀντὶ σάλπιγγος instead of a Trumpet (*Lib. V. Antiq. Cap. 8.*) for Rams Horns are not hollow : And the *LXX* only call them κέρατινας, not saying of what they were made. It may be supposed, indeed, that Rams Horns were made hollow for this Use, as the *Jews* make them at this Day.

And he sent all the rest of Israel, every Man unto his Tent.] Who, it is probable, did not go so far, but that they were ready to join with those who pursued the *Midianites* after their Defeat, *Ver. 23, 24.*

And retained those three hundred Men.] Kept no more with him than this Number whom *God* had chosen to accomplish his Promise.

And the Host of Midian was beneath him in the Valley.] It seems his small Handful of Men lay encamped upon an Hill, where the *Midianites* thought it not safe to assault them, not knowing what Number they were, nor how intrenched, and therefore they lay still in the Valley of *Jezreel*.

Ver. 9. *And it came to pass the same Night.*] After he had reduced his Forces to this small Number.

That the LORD said unto him, Arise, get thee down unto the Host of the Midianites.] Who lay in the Valley below him.

For I have delivered it into thy Hand.] There, he means, he should understand, and be fully

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satisfied by what he should hear, that his Victory over them was as sure, as if he had already obtained it.

Ver. 10. *But if thou fear to go down.*] As he had some Reason, having now such a slender Company with him.

Go thou with Phurah thy Servant down to the Host.] Every Man is more afraid alone, than when he hath a trusty Companion with him ; yet it was not fit to carry more than one, whose Fidelity was known to him ; for secret Designs are not to be committed to many.

Ver. 11. *And thou shalt hear what they say.*] Hear the Discourse that some of them would have with one another.

And afterward shall thine Hand be strengthened to go down unto the Host.] Whereby he should be encouraged to attack that great Army, with so small a Number as he had remaining with him. This shews how exceeding acceptable his Faith and Obedience was to *God*, in sending away as many of his Army, as he bad him dismiss ; for now he gives him a further Confirmation of his Faith, without asking.

Then went he down with Phurah his Servant. Faith had quite expelled all his Fear.

Unto the Outside of the armed Men that were in the Host.] To the Out-guards, as we now speak, who seem to have consisted of fifty Men, as the *LXX* think the Hebrew Word *Chamuschim* signifies ; for they translate it τῶν πενήκοντα.

Ver. 12. *And the Midianites and Amalekites, and all the Children of the Earth.*] who joined with them in this Invasion.

Lay long in the Valley.] Of *Jezreel* before mentioned, into which *Gideon* now went down.

Like Grasshoppers for Multitude.] See vi. 5.

And their Camels were without Number.] Both *Midian* and *Amalek*, and the Countries about them, abounded with Camels, which were serviceable to them in their Wars, as well as in carrying Burdens. See *Bochart*, in his *Hierozycon*, P. I. Lib. II. Cap. 2. And in them they placed their principal Riches, as he observes out of *Leo Africanus*, who saith, That when the *Arabians* would express the great Wealth of their Prince, they do not say, he hath so many thousand Pounds of Gold or Silver, but so many thousand Camels.

As the Sand by the Sea Side for Multitude.] So the *Hebrews* are wont to express a vastly great Number. The certain Knowledge of their Number, it is likely, never came to the Knowledge of the *Israelites* ; but we read of an hundred and twenty thousand Men that were slain, and fifteen thousand that escaped, with their two Princes, viii. 10. And how many were taken Captive, is not recorded.

Ver. 13. *And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a Man that told a Dream unto his Fellow.*] Which troubled his Thoughts, I suppose, when he was awake, as the Dream of *Pharaoh*, and his Butler and Baker, and of *Nebuchadnezzar*, in After-times, disturbed them.

And said, Behold, I dreamed a Dream, and lo a Cake of Barley Bread.] Or, as the *Vulgar* translate it, *A Loaf baked in the Ashes*, which was the meanest of all other Bread, and hastily prepared.

Tumbled.] Came tumbling down like a Bowl from the Mountain.

Into the Host of Midian.] Through all the Guards, into the very Middle of the Army, which was a Sign that Gideon should break thro' all Opposition.

And came unto a Tent.] The principal Tent, which was pitched for their Kings, or their General, in the midst of the Host.

And smote it, that it fell.] This seemed strange to the Man, that so small a Thing as a Cake, or a Loaf of Bread, should throw down a Tent, which was not shaken by a strong Wind.

And overturned it, that the Tent lay along.] It not only fell, but was so shattered that it could not be reared up again; which was a lively Emblem of the utter Overthrow of the *Midianites*, and their numerous Host, by Gideon, and his small Company, as his Fellow-Soldier interpreted it.

Ver. 14. *And his Fellow answered and said.*] It appears by the Example before mentioned, that God sometimes sent Dreams into the Minds of *Pagan People*, who were much concerned to find an Interpreter of them: But here, by a singular Providence, one of his Comrades was inspired to tell the Meaning immediately.

This is nothing else, save the Sword of Gideon, the Son of Joash.] The Barley Cake was a fit Emblem of Gideon and his Soldiers, who were a small Number, as a Cake is made of a little Flower kneaded together; and was mean also, and contemptible, in Comparison with the *Midianites*, as a Barley Cake is in Comparison with Wheaten Bread: But the Man could not have understood this, unless God had suggested it to him, for the Confirmation of Gideon's Faith and Resolution.

A Man of Israel.] i. e. A great Commander; for so the *Hebrews* truly interpret the Word *Isch*, who (as *L'Empereur* observes out of *R. Schamaja*) called the Governor, or chief Commander of those who guarded the Temple, *Isch bar habeth*, The Man of the Mountain of the Temple. *Cod. Middoth*, Cap. 1.

For into his Hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the Host.] All their Confederates. Nothing is more vain, than our common Dreams, yet God hath sometimes admonished Men that Way of future Things, as many of the Heathens themselves acknowledge, (and those, the wisest of them, such as *Hippocrates*.) But that a common Soldier should give such an exact Interpretation of another Soldier's Dream, and that against themselves, and their own Nation, is very extraordinary.

Ver. 15. *And it was so, when Gideon heard the Telling of the Dream, and the Interpretation thereof.*] He understood the *Midianitish* Language, it is likely, having been long a Subject to that Nation; or, perhaps, it did not differ much from the *Hebrew*.

That he worshipped.] Gave humble Thanks to God for his Goodness, in giving him new Encouragement to proceed in his Undertaking.

And returned to the Host of Israel.] So he calls it, (though it scarce deserved that Name)

because God intended to do the same by this small Number, as if they had been a great Host.

And said, Arise, for the Lord hath delivered into your Hand, the Host of Midian.] He bids them make no Doubt, nor Delay, for God had given fresh Assurance of Success.

Ver. 16. *And he divided the three hundred Men into three Companies.*] Under three Commanders in Chief, as the *Hebrew Raschim* imports, which signifies *Heads*.

And he put a Trumpet into every Man's Hand.] That they might make a Sound of a great Army.

With empty Pitchers.] Earthen Pitchers, which had no Water in them; wherein they hid their Lamps, till they should think fit to light them.

And Lamps within their Pitchers.] Or, rather, *Torches*; for, no doubt, they were made of Pitch, or Wax, or Rosin, and such like things as would burn long, and not be blown out by the Wind, as *Lamps* made of Oil only are apt to be.

Ver. 17. *And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise.*] Follow my Example.

And behold, when I come to the Outside of the Camp.] Where he began the Assault.

It shall be, that as I do, so shall ye do.] I suppose he told them what he would do, viz. After they heard him blow the Trumpet, (as it follows in the next Verse) they should do the same, and then break their Pitchers, and light their Torches, &c.

Ver. 18. *When I blow with a Trumpet, I, and all that are with me.*] It is likely he commanded one of the three Troops, with whom he began the Attack, as the next Verse imports.

Then blow ye the Trumpet also, on every Side of all the Camp.] By this it appears, that they did not fall upon them all in one Place, but some on one Part of their Camp, some on another, that they might strike the greater Terror into them, and put them into Confusion.

And say, the Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon.] The Word *Sword* is not here in the *Hebrew*, where these Words run thus, *For the Lord, and for Gideon*: But there being mention of the *Sword*, Ver. 20. it moved our Translators to add it here also: And it is not to be thought contrary to the Design of God, (who would have the Victory ascribed to himself, Ver. 2.) that Gideon here joins his own Name, with God's, when they went to fight; for, as he puts God in the first place, and names himself only as his Minister; so, it is likely, he had Directions from God for it; who knew the Name of Gideon, of whose extraordinary Courage, no doubt, the *Midianites* had heard, would be very formidable to them.

Ver. 19. *So Gideon and the hundred Men that were with him.*] The *Vulgar* took an hundred to be put for the whole Host of Gideon, and therefore saith, *The three hundred Men that were with him*: But the *LXX* expressly follows the *Hebrew*; and it is most probable that he led only an hundred Men himself, the rest being commanded by some other valiant Captains.

And came to the Outside of the Camp.] It is not said on what Quarter; but it is probable on the East Part of their Camp, as the Second Troop set upon them on the North-East Part, and the Third on the South-East: For this Way they knew they would bend their Flight when they were routed, and endeavoured to escape; their own Country, and the Fords of *Jordan* lying on the East: And if they ran Westward, there were *Israelites* enough to pursue them, and cut them off.

In the Beginning of the middle Watch, and they had but newly set the Watch.] That is, a little after Midnight: For there were three Watches among the *Hebrews* and the rest of the Eastern Nations, as *Bochart* observes out of *Kimchi*, and *R. Solomon*, and others; the Night being divided into three Parts: And when the first third Part was ended, they that had watched went to sleep, and another Company succeeded them, till the Morning Watch. The *Romans* afterward divided the Night into four Parts, from whence we read, in the Gospel, of the fourth Watch.

And they blew the Trumpets, and brake the Pitchers that were in their Hands.] Tho' *Gideon* placed his Hope in God alone, yet he did not neglect such prudent Stratagems as are used in War, but made an Appearance of a greater Number of Men than he had with him: For hearing three hundred Trumpets sound, the *Midianites* could not but apprehend a great Army was come to assault them: The breaking of the Pitchers also made a clattering Noise, and the Torches then, on a sudden, flaring in their Eyes, was very amazing, especially when they heard them shout, for the LORD, and for *Gideon*: He chose also to make his Attack at Midnight, when they were in a dead Sleep, and expected no Disturbance.

Ver. 20. *And the three Companies.]* The former Words were concerning *Gideon* and his Men, who began the Attack; whose Example the rest of the three Companies followed, as he required, Ver. 17, 18.

Blew the Trumpets, and break the Pitchers, and held the Lamps in their left Hand, and the Trumpets in their Right Hand to blow withal.] So that they made no use of their Swords, in the first Onset; both Hands being full of something else.

And they cried, The Sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.] But this Stratagem had been of no Efficacy, if God had not struck such a Terror into them, when they heard these Words, as quite confounded them: And yet these Words do not import, as I said before, that the Victory was divided between the LORD and *Gideon*; for it is most likely (as *Pet. Martyr* observes) that God suggested even this Stratagem to *Gideon*, and made it successful.

Ver. 21. *And they stood every Man in his Place round about the Camp.]* Not one of the Three Hundred Men stirred a Foot from his Place, but stood there without striking a Stroke; as if they had been only Torch-bearers, to give Light to their Army, to see their Way to the Camp, and to do Execution.

And all the Host ran, and cried, and fled.] They did not stand in their Ranks to repel the *Israelites*; but brake up their Camp, (as the *Hebrew* Word *Jaratz* may be translated) and cried out with a lamentable Voice, fleeing as fast as they could to their own Country.

Ver. 22. *And the three hundred Men blew the Trumpets.]* That is, continued to blow them without ceasing.

And the LORD set every Man's Sword against his Fellow, even throughout all the Host.] Being suddenly awaked out of their Sleep in the Middle of the Night, and hearing such a Noise, as if a vast Multitude were falling upon them, they were in such Disorder, (which was increased by the Clattering of the Pitchers, and the Blaze of the Torches) that they could not distinguish their Friends from their Enemies, but killed one another; every Man falling upon him that was next to him, whom he fancied to be one of *Gideon's* Army. Thus the *Philistines* were defeated by *Jonathan*, 1 Sam. xiv. 16, 20. and the *Ammonites*, *Moabites*, and *Edomites*, in the Days of *Jehoshaphat*, 2 Chron. xx. 22, 23.

And the Host fled to Beth-shittab, in Zererath, and to the Border of Abel-Meholah, unto Tabbath.] We find none of these Places mentioned elsewhere in Scripture, but only *Abel-Meholah*, in 1 Kings iv. 12. xix. 16. which being in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, not far from the River *Jordan*, may support a Conjecture, that the rest of the Places were in the Way thither.

Ver. 23. *And the Men of Israel gathered themselves together out of Naphtali, and out of Asher.]* He had sent to these Tribes at the first raising of his Army, and also to *Zebulun*, who, being Neighbours, came to join him, vi. 35.

And out of all Manasse.] Who were the forwardest in this Enterprize, being his own Tribe.

And pursued after the Midianites.] Tho' they had been lately disbanded by God's Order, yet it is likely they lay ready, if there should be Occasion, to help to compleat the Victory.

Ver. 24. *And Gideon sent Messengers throughout all Mount Ephraim.]* He was desirous that others should have some Share with him, in finishing this Work; though he alone, with some few, began it, and were exposed to all the Danger. Would to God (saith *P. Martyr* on this Occasion) that we were of this Spirit in the Church of Christ, that when any noble Work is begun, we would call in all to help to perfect it: But alas! such are our Sins, we oft-times do all we are able, to hinder one another.

Saying, Come down against the Midianites.] He invites them to come to his Assistance against the common Enemy; which his small Handful of Men were not sufficient to destroy, though they had entirely routed them.

And take before them the Waters.] He would have them make such haste, as to possess themselves of the Fords, before the *Midianites* could get to them.

Unto Beth-barab, and Jordan.] It is very probable, that *Beth-barab* is the same Place with *Beth-abara* in St. John's Gospel, i. 28. being

being the Place, where the *Israelites* passed over *Jordan*, when they first entered *Canaan*: And then by *Jordan* must be meant all the Fords upon this River, from *Beth-barab* to the Lake of *Genesaret*.

Then all the Men of Ephraim gathered themselves together, and took the Waters unto Beth-barab and Jordan.] Posted themselves all along the River, from the Lake before-mentioned, unto *Beth-barab*.

Ver. 25. *And they took two Princes of the Midianites.*] Two great Commanders, as the Word *Sarim* signifies, which we translate *Princes*.

Oreb and Zeeb.] From hence some gather that the *Midianitish* Language did not much differ from the *Hebrew*: In which *Oreb* signifies a *Crow*, and *Zeeb* a *Wolf*; from which Creatures, and such like, it seems very anciently great Men thought fit to take the Names of their Families: As the *Romans* did afterwards (among whom we read of the *Corvini*, and *Gracchi*, and *Aquilini*, &c.) either as Omens, or as Monuments of their undaunted Courage and Dexterity in Military Achievements

And they slew Oreb upon the Rock Oreb.] It is likely that there he was taken hidden in some Hole; and from his Slaughter there, the Rock had its Name in future Times.

And Zeeb they slew at the Wine-press of Zeeb.] Where he also in like manner being taken and slain, gave Name to this Place.

And pursued Midian.] Did not content themselves with this, but pursued them to the other Side of *Jordan*; whither some of them had escaped, before they would obey *Gideon's* Summons.

And brought the Heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon.] As the manner was in After-times, when they would gratify a great Conqueror, with a welcome Spectacle: For thus *Pompey's* Head was offered to *Cæsar*, and *Cicero's* to *Mark Anthony*.

On the other Side Jordan.] Over which we read (viii. 4.) *Gideon* passed, in the Pursuit of the Enemy.

C H A P. VIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Men of Ephraim said unto him.*] When they presented the Heads of the two Princes unto him.

Why hast thou served us thus?] They thought themselves slighted by their Brethren of the Tribe of *Manasseh*; which they took the more heinously, because they looked upon themselves to be every way superior to them, by the Blessing of *Jacob*.

That thou calledst us not, when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites.] As he had done other meaner Tribes, (vi. 35.) who were not so able to assist him as themselves.

And they did chide with him sharply.] Spake very angry Words, as if they would have come to Blows.

Ver. 2. *And he said, what have I done now in Comparison with you?*] Proud Men love to

be praised; and therefore he magnifies their Service as far surpassing his own.

Is not the Gleaning of the Grapes of Ephraim, better than the Vintage of Abiezer?] A common Proverb, I suppose, in those Days, whereby they were wont to commend the smallest Action of one, as superior to the greatest of another: And here it is most fitly applied; for it is as if he had said, These scattered Parties that you have gleaned and picked up (as we now speak) at the Fords of *Jordan*, are far more than those which I and my whole Host (as it is called, vii. 15.) have destroyed.

Ver. 3. *God hath delivered into your Hands the Princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb.*] Which he was content they should think more considerable than all the common Men that he had vanquished.

And what was I able to do in Comparison with you?] To yield unto others the Glory which they affect, wonderfully appeases their highest Displeasure.

Then their Anger was abated towards him, when he had said that.] According to that of *Solomon*, *Prov. xv. 1.* This is an Argument of the singular Modesty and Prudence of *Gideon*, and no less conspicuous in him than his Courage; which is a Mixture that rarely meets together, but is absolutely necessary to make a truly great Man; who never appears so great, as when he treats insolent Men with Humility, and angry Men with Meekness.

Ver. 4. *And Gideon came to Jordan, and passed over.*] Or rather, *had passed over*; for he was gone over *Jordan* before *Oreb* and *Zeeb* were taken; but it is not related till now, that what concerned the *Ephraimites* might be told all together, without Interruption.

He and the three hundred Men that were with him.] Not one of which was lost.

Faint, yet pursuing them.] Tired with a long March, and eager Pursuit; which notwithstanding they continued, being more solicitous for the publick Safety than their own.

Ver. 5. *And he said unto the Men of Succoth.*] A City in the Tribe of *Gad*, mentioned in *Gen. xxxiii. 17.* and other Places.

Give, I pray you, Loaves of Bread unto the People that follow me.] A small Request, considering their great Merits.

For they be faint, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmunna.] He gives two Reasons for his Request; because his Men were faint with a whole Night's Labour for the publick Safety, and he had not made his Victory so compleat as he hoped to do, if his Men were refreshed and enabled to pursue the Enemy.

Kings of Midian.] It is no Wonder we read of more Kings than one in this Country, there being Five in *Moses's* Time, (*Numb. xxxi. 8.*) and more than Five times Five in *Canaan*, which was divided into many petty Kingdoms: And therefore if we take *Oreb* and *Zeeb* also to have been Kings, there is no Improbability in it.

Ver. 6. *And the Princes of Succoth said.*] The Rulers and Governors of the City, who had the chief Authority among them; as *Oreb* and *Zeeb*

Zeeb had in the Army of *Midian*, for it is the very same Word in the *Hebrew*.

Are the Hands of Zebab and Zalmunna now in thy Hand, that we should give Bread unto thy Army ?] They bid him first take those Kings Captives, and bring them thither with their Hands bound behind them, before he made any Demands of them. It is a bitter sort of Taunt or Derision, arising from Irreligion ; which made them think there was nothing of God in this Victory, and that he would not be able to perfect it.

Ver. 7. *And Gideon said, Therefore when the LORD hath delivered Zebab and Zalmunna into my Hand.*] As he was confident he would.

Then will I tear your Flesh with the Thorns of the Wilderness, and with Briers.] This City was near to a Wilderness, in which there were plenty of Thorns and Briers ; with which he threatens to thresh their Flesh, as the Word is in the *Hebrew* : Which some think signifies, that laying Briers and Thorns upon their naked Bodies, he intended to bring the Cart-wheel over them (as the Manner was of threshing out their Corn) to fasten them deep in their Flesh, and then crush them to Death : Such a Kind of Punishment *David* inflicted on the *Ammonites*, 2 *Sam.* xii. ult.

Ver. 8. *And he went up from thence.*] He would not stay to avenge this Repulse at present, but sacrificed his private Resentment to the Publick Service, and therefore went on after the Enemy.

Unto Penuel.] Another City in the Tribe of *Gad*, not far from *Succoth* ; unto both which *Jacob* gave their Name, *Gen.* xxxii. 30. xxxiii. 17.

And spake unto them likewise.] Desired some Provision of them, for the same Reason.

And the Men of Penuel.] i. e. The principal Persons of the City.

Answered him as the Men of Succoth had answered him.] It is very likely they were Idolaters ; and therefore hated *Gideon*, who began to reform Religion : And, trusting to the Strength of their Tower, despised the small Forces he had with him.

Ver. 9. *And he spake unto the Men of Penuel, saying, When I come again in Peace, I will break down this Tower.*] In which they confided ; and perhaps pointed to it, when they gave him their rude Answer.

Ver. 10. *Now Zebab and Zalmunna were in Karkor.*] We read of this Place no where else ; and therefore it is but a Conjecture that it was in the Confines of the Tribe of *Gad*, *S. Hierom* saith, There was a Castle in his Time called *Carcaria*, about a Day's Journey from the City *Petra*, and *Eusebius* saith the same.

And all the Host with them.] That is, all the Troops or Regiments, as we now speak, that fled with them.

About Fifteen Thousand Men, all that were left of all the Hosts of the Children of the East.] This moved those of *Succoth* and *Penuel* to mock at *Gideon* ; that he should think with Three Hundred Men, and they fatigued, (as

we now speak) to vanquish Fifteen Thousand, and that he should make Demands to them, as if he had his Enemies already in his Power.

For there fell an Hundred and Twenty Thousand Men that drew Sword.] Besides all the People that attended their Baggage.

Ver. 11. *And Gideon went up by the Way of them that dwelt in Tents.*] He fetched a Compass, by the Country of the *Arabians* called *Scenitæ*, because they dwelt in Tents : And so he came upon the Back of *Zebab* and *Zalmunna* ; where they suspected no Danger.

On the East of Nobab and Jogbebab.] Two Cities, the last of which is expressly said to be in the Tribe of *Gad*, *Numb.* xxxii. 35. and the former in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, on the Borders of *Gad*, as may be gathered from this Place.

And smote the Host, for the Host was secure.] He fell upon them, it is very probable, in the Night, as he had done upon their main Army at the first : And they having fled as fast as they could the Day, and Part of the Night before, were gone to take their Rest ; supposing they had been out of all Danger of Disturbance, now they were got so far from the Place of Battle.

Ver. 12. *And when Zebab and Zalmunna fled, he pursued after them.*] We read of no Refreshment that he and his Men had all this time ; but either they met with some by the Way, or God miraculously supported them.

And took the two Kings of Midian, Zebab and Zalmunna, and discomfited all the Host.] Having routed their Army, the two Kings could make little Resistance.

Ver. 13. *And Gideon the Son of Joash returned from the Battle before the Sun was up.*] The *Hebrew* Words *Milmahaleh Hachares* are so variously translated by very learned Men, that it hath made it uncertain whether he returned after Sunrise, or a little before it set, (as *Kimchi* among the *Jews*, and *Mercer* among Christians understand it) or, as our Translation, before Sunrise : So the *Vulgar*, with *Junius* and *Tremellius*, and others. And then it shews, both that *Gideon* had smote the Army in the Night, and that he made such Haste to return, that he came to *Succoth* before they were aware, by break of Day.

Ver. 14. *And caught a young Man of the Men of Succoth, and enquired of him.*] Surprized him in the Field, and examined him who were the principal Men of the City.

And he described to him the Princes of Succoth, and the Elders thereof, even threescore and seventeen Men.] He wrote down (as the *Hebrew* Word for describe signifies) the Names, and, perhaps, the Dwellings of the great Men of the City, and of the Judges ; who were the Persons that derided him, and whom alone he intended to punish ; not all the People, who were not in the Guilt.

Ver. 15. *And he came unto the Men of Succoth.*] Got into the City very early ; and called those Men before him, who had put the late Affront upon him.

And

And said, Behold Zebah and Zalmunna, with whom you upbraided me.] He kept these two Kings alive on purpose that the Princes of Succoth might see the LORD had delivered them into his Hand; and made their Jeers turn to their own Shame.

Saying, Are the Hands of Zebah and Zalmunna in thy Hand, that we should give Bread unto thy Men that are weary?] He repeats their own Words to them (Ver. 6.) that he might reproach them with their inhuman Usage of him; when he was in Distress, and had done such Wonders for their Preservation.

Ver. 16. *And he took the Elders of the City.]* Under this Name of Elders, all their great Men are comprehended.

And Thorns of the Wilderneys and Briers.] Which he had ready at Hand.

And with them he taught the Men of Succoth.] He threshed or tare them (as he threatened, Ver. 7. and as some Copies here have it) and by this severe Correction, taught them better Manners, and more Wisdom. It is not said that he tormented them till they expired, (as some think he did, see Ver. 7.) for then it would have been as plainly said, as it is in the next Verse of the Men of Penuel.

Ver. 17. *And he beat down the Tower of Penuel, and slew the Men of the City.]* It is not said the Princes and Elders, and therefore this looks as if the whole City had been guilty of the Affront put upon him, and consequently punished by him. But the Men of the City in this Story hath signified only the principal Persons in it, as I interpreted Ver. 8. See Ver. 15, 16. and therefore it is probable no other Men are here meant, who fled into the Tower, perhaps, for Safety, (knowing their own Guilt, and the Danger they were in of suffering for it) and were there slain.

Ver. 18. *Then said he unto Zebah and Zalmunna, What manner of Men were they, whom ye slew at Tabor?]* Where Gideon brought them before him to be judged, is uncertain: And when it was that they slew some Israelites at Tabor, we can but guess. It is probable he brought them out to receive their Sentence, after he came Home: And that some who hid themselves in Dens and Caves which were in the Mountains, (vi. 2.) being found out, were slain by the Midianites. And Gideon's Brethren being missing, he desired to find out, whether they were the Persons whom they slew.

And they answered, As thou art, so were they.] They were very like him, and perhaps resembled him in their Countenance; as Brethren frequently do one another.

Every one resembled the Children of a King.] By this it appears, that Gideon was of a goodly Presence; carrying Greatness and Majesty in his Aspect: And that Kings took Care in those Days to match only with graceful Persons; by whom they might hope to have Children like to themselves.

Ver. 19. *And he said, They were my Brethren, even the Sons of my Mother.]* Though, perhaps, not by the same Father.

As the LORD liveth, if he had spared them alive.] As generous Men are wont to do comely

and graceful Persons; who look like Men of Quality, as we now speak.

I would not slay you.] For not being of the Race of Canaan, he was not bound by the Law to cut them off.

Ver. 20. *And he said unto Jether his First-born, Up and slay them.]* It was not unusual for great Persons to do Execution upon Offenders in antient Times; no more than it unbecame them to sentence them Death: And therefore they had not, as now, such as the Romans called *Carnifices*, publick Executioners; but Saul bad such as waited on him kill the Priests; and Doeg, one of his great Officers, did it, 1 Sam. xxii. 17, 18. And Samuel himself is said to have hewed Agag to pieces in Gilgal; and Benaiab, the General of the Army, to have fallen upon Joab at the Horns of the Altar. Accordingly Gideon would have had his Son do this Execution, that he might be early animated against the Enemies of Israel; as Hannibal is reported, when he was a Boy, to have been incensed against the Romans.

But the Youth drew not his Sword; for he feared, because he was yet a Youth.] They were Men, it is likely, of great Stature, and of a fierce and stern Countenance, who (as appears by the Story) feared not Death; which made the Youth afraid even to look upon them.

Ver. 21. *Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, Arise thou, and fall upon us, for as the Man is, so is his Strength.]* They thought it more honourable to die by the Hand of Gideon, who was a Man of as great Strength, as Dignity; and would sooner dispatch them, than a Stripling could do.

And Gideon arose, and slew Zebah and Zalmunna, and took away the Ornaments that were about their Camels Necks.] As well as all the Ornaments, which they wore themselves. The Word *Sabaronim*, is found no where but here, and Ver. 26. and in *Isaiab* iii. 18. where we translate it *round Tires like the Moon*. So our Margin also in this Place, *Ornaments like the Moon*; following the LXX, who translate it *μηνίσκους*, little Moons. So antient was this Custom of wearing Ornaments of this Figure; which was spread afterward over many Nations. *Huetius* thinks it came originally from the *Phœnicians*, who were the Worshipers of *Astarte*, i. e. the Moon, and went from them to the *Arabians*, who were very antiently devoted to the Moon, who propagated it to the *Turks*; and the *Brachmans* also are wont to adorn their Heads in the same Figure; as he observes in his *Demonstr. Evangel. Propos. iv. p. 197*.

Ver. 22. *Then the Men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou and thy Son, and thy Son's Son also.]* They would have made his Dominion over them, Hereditary.

For thou hast delivered us from the Hand of Midian.] They pretended to make this Offer, out of Gratitude to him; but in Truth, they were disposed now (as their Posterity were afterward) to throw off the Divine Government; being desirous to set a King over themselves, like the rest of the Nations round about them. And now they thought was a fit Opportunity; when such an extraordinary Judge was raised

up, as had done Wonders beyond all his Predecessors; and might, they thought, be ambitious enough to establish the supreme Authority in his Family.

Ver. 23. *But Gideon said, I will not rule over you, neither shall my Son rule over you.*] He absolutely rejected their Offer; because he looked upon God as their King, who appointed what Deputy he pleased to rule them: And therefore he accounted this to be an Attempt to alter the Government of God, without asking his Consent.

The LORD shall rule over you.] As he hath done hitherto. This shews, that these two could not consist together; a successive Dominion of Kings, and such Governors as they now had by the divine Appointment. Such a one was *Gideon*, raised up by God when they needed a Deliverer; and therefore he durst not accept of the Authority they offered him, because it was a thing sacred, and proper only to the divine Majesty to order who should govern: Whence it is, that the Judgment which was administered among that People, was called God's Judgment, *Deut. i. 17.* and *Solomon* is said to sit upon the Throne of the LORD, *1 Chron. xxix. 23.* and the Kingdom of his Posterity is called the Kingdom of the LORD, *2 Chron. xiii. 8.* because, before Kings were settled in *Israel*, the LORD was their King; from whom the Government was derived to the House of *David* by a special Act of God.

Ver. 24. *And Gideon said unto them, I would desire a Request of you.*] Which he thought, after such a great Offer from them, they would not deny him.

That ye would give me every Man the Ear-rings of his Prey.] He doth not ask all the Ear-rings they had got; but from every Man one, or as many as he pleased.

For they had golden Ear-rings, because they were Ishmaelites.] The *Chaldee* Paraphrast well expresses it, *because they were Arabians*, who are called the Children of the East, *vi. 3.* and generally wore such Ornaments, as I observed upon *Exod. xxxii. 2.* *Ishmaelites* also, and *Midianites* were so near Neighbours, and so mixed together, that the Scripture speaks of them as one People. See upon *Gen. xxxvii. 28.*

Ver. 25. *And they answered, We will willingly give them; and they spread a Garment, and did cast therein every Man the Ear-rings of his Prey.*] They made no difficulty to grant his Request; but, as we speak, no sooner said than done.

Ver. 26. *And the Weight of the Golden Ear-rings that he requested, was a thousand and seven hundred Shekels of Gold.*] It is easy to compute what this makes of our Money, by considering the Value of a Shekel, and the Proportion that Silver holds to Gold. Of which see the very learned Treatise of the Bishop of *Peterborough*, concerning *Scripture Weights and Measures*, Chap. 4.

Beside Ornaments.] Of which see above, *Ver. 21.*

And the Collars.] The Hebrew Word *Hane-tipboth*, is thought to signify little Pots of precious Ointments. For *Neteph* signifies a Drop

or a Tear; the most precious of which is Balsam. Among the Spoils of *Darius* (as *Arias Montanus* observes) Historians mention Boxes of Ointments set with precious Stones, and curiously wrought with elegant Art.

And Purple Raiment that was on the Kings of Midian.] Who were distinguished from other Men, as Kings are now, by Robes peculiar to them.

And beside the Chains that were upon their Camels Necks.] All these, I take it, sell to *Gideon's* Share, by the Custom of War, without asking. For it was the ancient Manner, as *Grotius* observes, to give the Commander in Chief the best of the Spoils they had taken.

Ver. 27. *And Gideon made an Ephod thereof.*] He would not have them think that he requested the Ear-rings, for his own private Gain; but to employ them religiously in the Service of God, by making a Monument of his Victory, as obtained solely by the miraculous Mercy of God, for the restoring of his true Religion among them. It is commonly said, That so much Gold could not be laid out upon an *Ephod*, and therefore some take this for a short Expression, to signify the Breast-Plate, with the *Urim and Thummim*; that he (being now supreme Governor) might consult God at his own House, in such Difficulties as might occur: And they think it probable that he made also a private Tabernacle with Cherubims: For how else could he employ such a Quantity of Gold? An *Ephod* being only fine Linnen embroidered with it, &c. which would not cost much. See *Exod. xxviii. 6.* *Theodoret* and *St. Austin* seem to incline to this Opinion; for which I refer the Reader to our *Dr. Spencer* in his most learned Work, *de Leg. & Rit. Hebr.* P. 881. But I do not see how *Gideon* can be excused from Apostacy from God, if he set up an Oracle in his own House; nor was there any need of it, *Shiloh* being not far from him, in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, which adjoined to this of *Manasseh*. Therefore I take this *Ephod* to have been only a Monument of his Victory, and of God's great Mercy, which Conquerors were wont to erect: But he would not follow the common Custom in erecting a Pillar, and hanging up Trophies; or any thing of that Nature; but chose to make an *Ephod*, as a Token that he ascribed his Victory only to God, and triumphed in nothing, but only in the Restoration of the true Religion by his means. As for the Gold that was laid out upon it, the Reader may observe, that it is said *he made an Ephod thereof*, that is, out of this Offering; but not that it was all spent in this.

And put it in his City, even in Ophrah.] This is to be well noted; because I think it shews that *Gideon* did not make this, that he might have resort to God thereby on all Occasions at home; for he went and dwelt at another Place, *Ver. 29.* It was kept here therefore as a Monument of God's appearing to him, and of the Sacrifice the Angel here offered, and of all the Wonders that followed, by the Power of God who dwelt in the Sanctuary. There are those who think, that because God bad *Gideon* build an Altar, and offer his Father's second Bullock

in *Opbrab*, vi. 26. he thence concluded, he might take upon him to have Priestly Garments made, and the High Priest came to minister at *Opbrab* upon extraordinary Occasions. But he understood Religion better than to make such Conclusions, unless he had received a divine Command for this, as he did for the building of an Altar.

And all Israel went thither a whoring after it.] This, I suppose, was after his Death, when the People began to return to Idolatry; and had this Fancy, among others, that God would answer them here where this *Ephod* was, as well as at his Tabernacle in *Shiloh*, where he dwelt.

Which Thing became a Snare unto Gideon and his House.] Occasioned the Ruin of him, and of his Family. For tho' they perished after his Death, yet he may be said to have suffered with them, because his Name and Memory, which is preserved in Mens Posterity, was in a manner extinct in *Israel*.

Ver. 28. *Thus was Midian subdued before the Children of Israel, so that they lifted up their Heads no more.]* To oppress the *Israelites*; or, perhaps, to disturb any of their Neighbours.

And the Country was in Quietness forty Years, in the Days of Gideon.] The Country was in Quiet in the fortieth Year after the former Rest restored to it by *Deborah* and *Barak*, as our Primate *Usher* understands it, in his *Annals ad A. M. 2759.* and in his *Chronologia Sacra, Pars 1. Cap. xiii.* where, in more Words, he thus interprets it: *In the fortieth Year after the Rest restored by Deborah and Barak, the Land began to rest again in the Days of Gideon, after he had subdued the Midianites, who had oppressed them seven Years.* But the plainest Account is, that after seven Years Oppression by the *Midianites*, the Country was in Peace forty Years in the Days of *Gideon*, who was their Deliverer; and died, as we read *Ver. 32.* in a good old Age.

Ver. 29. *And Jerubbaal the Son of Joash went and dwelt in his own House.]* Having refused to be a King, and dismissed his Army, he went from *Opbrab*, (as I understand it) and lived not so publickly as he had done, but in a private House of his own in the Country.

Ver. 30. *And Gideon had threescore and ten Sons, of his Body begotten.]* These last Words are added to shew, that they were none of them adopted Sons.

For he had many Wives.] According to the Manner of those Times. And this is said to lessen the Wonder of having so many Children; many Women bringing two or three at a Birth, and one Woman having had above twenty Children by one Man.

Ver. 31. *And his Concubine.]* The Difference between a Wife and a Concubine hath been often noted. Their Wives administered the Affairs of the Family, the Concubines meddled not with them; but, as the Word signifies, were only admitted to their Beds: And their Children did not inherit, though they were married to them; for they were not Harlots, but a secondary Sort of Wives.

That was in Shechem.] A famous City in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, adjoining to that of

Manasseh; where going frequently to judge the People, he took a Wife of this Sort, who lived constantly with her Father in this City, and not in *Gideon's* Family.

She also bare him a Son.] Besides the Seventy before-mentioned, as *Josephus* understands it.

Whose Name was Abimelech.] His Name is here set down, when nothing is said of the Names of the rest, because the following Story depends upon it. And perhaps his Mother gave him this Name (signifying, *My Father a King*) out of Pride and Arrogance; that she might be looked upon as the Wife of one who was thought to deserve a Kingdom, tho' he did not accept it: Which afterwards, it's likely, inflamed the Mind of this Son to affect the Royal Dignity.

Ver. 32. *And Gideon the Son of Joash died in a good old Age.]* This is a Phrase often used in Scripture, to signify that such Persons lived long, and in great Prosperity and Happiness.

And was buried in the Sepulchre of Joash his Father, in Opbrab of the Abiezrites.] Which was accounted a great Blessing in those Days.

Ver. 33. *And it came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the Children of Israel turned again.]* He preserved them, it seems, in the true Religion while he lived; but they had no great Affection to it, it appears, by their revolting from it as soon as he was dead.

And went a whoring after Baalim.] This seems to have been a general Name of all the Gods which they worshipped; particularly of *Dæmons*; which were all called *Baalim* from the first *Dæmon*, or deified King in the World, *Belus* or *Baal*, as *Mr. Mede* thinks, Book 3. P. 777.

And made Baal-berith their God.] They worshipped a new God, which was not known to them before, nor ever mentioned but here, and in the next Chapter: Who was reputed, as some think, the God that punished those who broke their Covenants and Contracts; or, as others, was so called, because his Servants covenanted to maintain his Worship and Service. But *Bochartus*, by a more probable Conjecture, interprets it, *Baal of Berith*, i. e. of *Berytus*. That *Baal* which was worshipped in that famous City, which had its Name from *Beroe*, the Daughter of *Venus* and *Adonis*, who was there worshiped, as *Nonnus* tells us. This he takes to be the *Baal* here mentioned; for *Baal* is of the Feminine Gender, as well as of the Masculine, as appears from *St. Paul, Rom. xi. 4.* and many Places of the *LXX*, which *Bochartus* mentions Lib. 2. *Canaan*, Cap. 17.

Ver. 34. *And the Children of Israel remembered not the LORD their God, who had delivered them out of the Hands of all their Enemies on every Side.]* Out of the Hand of the King of *Mesopotamia*, and then of the *Moabites*, and after that of the *Canaanites*, and now lately of the *Midianites*, and the Children of the East.

Ver. 35. *Neither shewed they Kindness to the House of Jerubbaal, namely Gideon.]* No wonder they were so ungrateful to his Family, when they were so forgetful of God: The Fear of whom is the Foundation of all Virtue.

According

According to all the Goodness which he had shewn unto Israel.] In hazarding his Life freely, and working for them a glorious Deliverance; and in leaving them in their Liberty, by refusing the despotick Power, which they offered to put into his Hands; in governing them so prudently many Years, that he left them in Peace, and in the Possession of God's true Religion, when he died.

C H A P. IX.

Ver. 1. *AND Abimelech the Son of Jerubbaal went.]* From his Father's House, where it is likely he was educated.

Unto Shechem.] The Place of his Nativity.

Unto his Mother's Brethren.] Tho' the Word *Brethren* have many times a large Signification, yet it is reasonable here to understand it properly, of his Uncles by the Mother's Side; for his other near Kindred are mentioned in the Words following.

And communed with them, and with all the Family of the House of his Mother's Father, saying.] Discoursed with them, and with all the rest of his Cousins, and his near Kinsmen, descended from his Grandfather.

Ver. 2. *Speak I pray you in the Ears of all the Men of Shechem.]* By the *Men* of this City are to be understood, the chief Persons of Authority in it, as in the foregoing Chapter the *Men of Succoth* signify the Princes and Elders of that Place.

Whether is better for you, either that all the Sons of Jerubbaal (which are threescore and ten Persons) reign over you, or that one reign over you?] He wickedly supposed that the Sons of *Jerubbaal* were ambitious of the Kingdom which their Father refused; and therefore prays them to consider, what horrible Divisions and Confusion it would make, if so many were permitted to pretend to the Government; and how much better it would be to chuse one of them from among the rest; pointing then (in the next Words) to himself. He uses the Argument of *Homer*, mentioned by *Aristotle*, ἐχ' ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίᾳ, &c. It is better to be subject to the Rule of one Man, than of many.

Remember also that I am your Bone, and your Flesh.] Since there must be a King, he represents himself, as the most desirable to them of all other single Persons, he being of the same Tribe, and their Fellow Citizen.

Ver. 3. *And his Mother's Brethren spake of him in the Ears of the Men of Shechem, all these Words.]* They were ready enough to promote his Design, hoping for Preferment under him. But neither he nor they considered, that it did not belong to them to set a Judge over the People, much less a King, which was to shake off the Government of God.

And their Hearts inclined to follow Abimelech, for they said, He is our Brother.] This Consideration of their Interest in him, prevailed with them against the clearest Reason. For if it had been in any Person's Power to appoint a King, but God alone, the Men of *Shechem*

had it not in them, but all the Men of *Israel* ought to have been consulted.

Ver. 4. *And they gave him threescore and ten Pieces of Silver out of the House of Baal-berith.]* Out of the publick Treasury, which was in this Temple. It is uncertain what is meant by *Pieces of Silver*; but, in all Probability, more than *Shekels*; for they would have been but a small Present to make a Man a Prince. Therefore the Vulgar translate it so many Pound Weight of Silver, which learned Men approve of, particularly *Stanislaus Grepsius*, in his Book *de Siclo & Talento*. For seventy *Shekels* was too little for his Occasions; and so many *Talents* too much for them to give. And thus *Josephus* interprets *Gen. xxxvii. 28.* where it is said, *Joseph* was sold to the *Ishmaelites* for twenty Pieces of Silver; that is, for so many Pound Weight of it.

Wherewith Abimelech hired vain and light Persons.] The Hebrew Word *Rekim*, which we translate *vain*, signifies *empty*; that is, poor and needy Persons: And the other Word *Pochazim*, idle, vagabond Fellows, that could settle to no Business, but wandred about the Country; who being commonly Men of loose Lives, were fittest for his Purpose. Therefore *Kimchi* understands by them, *light-headed Persons*, (as we speak) who have no settled Principles, but are disposed to do any thing, tho' never so wicked. Such *Zephaniah* saith the Prophets in his Time were, *iii. 4. light and treacherous.*

Which followed him.] As a constant Guard to him.

Ver. 5. *And he went into his Father's House at Ophrah.]* With this wicked Crew to attend him; who, I suppose, beset the House, that none might escape out of it. I supposed that he had a House in the Country, *viii. 29.* for I could not see with what Propriety he could be said to go and dwell in his House at *Ophrah*, in which he had always lived. But this was the House of the Family, where all his Children lived.

And slew his Brethren the Sons of Jerubbaal, being threescore and ten Persons.] All of them, except *Jotham*. Thus *Romulus* slew his Brother *Remus*, as *Tully* observes, (*Lib. 3. de Officiis*) *Specie quadam utilitatis*, under the specious Pretence of the publick Good; that the Kingdom would be governed more happily by one, than by two Persons.

Upon one Stone.] Some understand this, as if he intended to make them a great Victim to *Baal*; for a *Stone* was sometimes used for an Altar, *1 Sam. vi. 14, 15.* And so they take this to have been done in Revenge of the Sacrifice of the Bullock prepared for *Baal* upon the Rock, (*vi. 25, 26.*) which Crime of *Gideon*, as these Idolaters accounted it, they designed to expiate by the Sacrifice of all his Sons that they could lay hold on. For that the Men of *Shechem* joined in this impious Slaughter, is manifest from *Ver. 18. and 24.* of this Chapter.

Notwithstanding, yet Jotham, the youngest Son of Jerubbaal, was left; for he hid himself.]

Either he had some Notice of their Intention, and saved himself by Flight, or when they came to seize them, got into some secret Place in the House, where they could not find him; or, by some that pitied his Youth, he was preserved from falling into their Hands. So the LXX. and the *Vulgar* translate it, *He was hid.*

Ver. 6. *And all the Men of Shechem gathered themselves together, and all the House of Millo.*] None seem to have understood these Words better than *Corn. Bertram*, in his little Book *de Republ. Jud.* Cap. 9. Where by *Col-baale Shechem*, he understands all the principal Men or Lords of that City; *Principes Civitatis*, the Princes of the City, by whom it was governed: And by *Col-beth Millo*, All the Citizens, who in a full Assembly (for *Millo* signifies *Fulness*) agreed upon what follows: And so we read in the next Chapter, x. 18. that the *People and Princes of Gilead* consulted together, who should fight for them; that is, All the Citizens met together, with their Elders, (as these *Princes* are called, xi. 5.) to advise about this Matter: For when the *Canaanites*, and other People, ruled over the *Israelites* and oppressed them, they contented themselves with setting such a Power over them, as should make them pay what Tribute they imposed, and other Taxes; but left them to their own Government and Laws, as appears from viii. 14. where we read of the Elders of *Succoth* in the Time of the *Midianites*.

And went.] To the Place where they were wont to meet for publick Business.

And made Abimelech King.] Voted him their King in full Senate.

In the Plain of the Pillar that was in Shechem.] Or the Oak (as *St. Hierom* commonly translates this Word *Elon*) where *Joshua* set up a Pillar as a Token of the Covenant between God and them, *Josh.* xxiv. 26. That is, in a very remarkable Place, as the Manner was to do such Things: But here, I suppose, they proclaimed him King, after they had chosen him in the common Hall of the City: And some think they intended hereby to declare, that they would not forsake the Worship of God, to which they were engaged, but only to join the Worship of *Baal* with him: But see what I have noted of this Pillar, *Deut.* xxvii. 13. And after all it must be confessed, that the *Hebrew* Word *Mutzab* doth not certainly signify a Pillar; for I cannot find it so used in any other Place of Scripture: And therefore *St. Hierom* translates this Passage thus, *By the Oak which stood in Shechem*, and the LXX. ἐν βαλάνῳ τῆς σάσεως, which seems to signify as if it was the Place where they had their Stations, or solemn Assemblies. See *Mr. Mede's* Discourse xviii.

Ver. 7. *And when they told it Jotham.*] Who had some Friends among them, that took care to inform him of what passed: But it is an amazing thing, that in all *Israel* there should none be found, to revenge the Murder of this noble Family: Of which no Account can be given, but that, with the Sense of God and

Religion, they had lost all Goodness and Virtue. See viii. 34, 35.

He went.] From the Place where he lay hid.

And stood on the Top of Mount Gerezim.] Which overlooked the City of *Shechem*. See *Deut.* xxvii. 12, 13.

And lift up his Voice, and cried and said unto them.] This was not on the same Day that *Abimelech* was inaugurated, but some Time after; when he, it is probable, was absent, and all the People met (as *Josephus* saith) at a publick Festival; which was a fair Opportunity for him to declare his Mind to them.

Hearken unto me, ye Men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you.] It is a Form of Adjuration, whereby he not only intreats, but obliges them to be as attentive to him, as they desired God would be to their Requests.

Ver. 8. *The Trees went forth on a Time.*] By this it appears, that such Fictions as these, wherein the most serious Truths are represented, were in use among the *Jews* (as they are still in the Eastern Countries) long before the Time of *Æsop*, or any other Author that we know of. And they made Choice of them for two Reasons; because Men would suffer themselves to be reprehended this Way, when they would not endure plain Words; and they heard them also with Delight and Pleasure, and more easily remembered them than a rational Discourse. So *A. Gellius* observes of *Æsop's* Fables, that they slid into the Mind and Affections of Men, *cum audiendi quadam illecebra*, with a certain Enticement to hear them, *Lib. 2. Cap. 29.*

To anoint a King over them.] This was two hundred Years (as *Mr. Selden* observes in his *Titles of Honour*) before the first Kings of *Israel* (*Saul* and *David*) were anointed. Which shews the great Antiquity of this Custom; and that it was the same to anoint a Person, and to declare him King.

And they said unto the Olive Tree, Reign thou over us.] By this they would easily apprehend he meant his Father *Gideon*; to whom all the *Israelites* had offered the Kingdom, when he was in a most flourishing Condition, and had newly triumphed over their Enemies.

Ver. 9. *But the Olive Tree said unto them.*] In this Reply he represents his Refusal of the Offer, and the Reason of it.

Shall I leave my Fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and Man.] He makes the Trees speak after the Manner of Men; who, when they are in a plentiful Condition, and live at Ease, are not willing to take upon themselves a great deal of Care and Trouble, especially when they think themselves to have Honour enough already; as *Gideon* had, in being such a glorious Conqueror over mighty Enemies. God and Man are said to be honoured by Oil, because it was offered in Sacrifice to God, and fed the Lamps of his House; and Priests were wont to be anointed with it among Men. See *Levit.* ii. 1, 4. *Numb.* xv. 4, 6, &c.

And go to be promoted among the Trees?] This is a most lively Representation of the Duty of

a good Man; who, for the publick Good, denies his own Quiet and Tranquillity. For the *Hebrew* Word we translate *promote*, signifies (as is noted in the Margin) Action and Agitation to and fro; shewing how a Man must bestir himself who executes the Kingly Office; and what Solicitude and continual Carefulness is the Concomitant of Authority, when it is duly administered.

Ver. 10. *And the Trees said unto the Fig-Tree, Come thou, and reign over us.*] He intends to represent the same Mind to be in all *Gideon's* Sons, that was in their Father: For as *Gideon* refused the Kingdom himself, so he did for his Posterity, saying, *I will not rule over you, neither shall my Son, or my Son's Son* (i. e. any of mine) *rule over you*, viii. 23. Therefore *Abimelech* had most vilely slandered them, in suggesting, that they affected a Regal Power over the People.

Ver. 11. *But the Fig-Tree said unto them, Shall I forsake my Sweetness, and my good Fruit, and go to be promoted over the Trees?*] No Fruit is more luscious than a Fig, which makes this an apt Representation of the sweet Content, or rather full Pleasure, that may be enjoyed in a private Life; which it would be Folly to exchange for the Troubles and Cares which Men meet withal in the Managery of publick Affairs, if they be not drawn to it purely out of Love to the publick Good.

Ver. 12. *Then said the Trees unto the Vine, Come thou, and reign over us.*] All these are noble Trees; setting forth the same thing, that better Men than *Abimelech* had refused that of which he was ambitious.

Ver. 13. *And the Vine said unto them, Shall I leave my Wine, which cheareth God and Man, and go to be promoted over the Trees?*] The same Thing is repeated, for the fuller Illustration of the Thing intended, according to the Manner of all such Ways of Speech: For *A. Gellius*, in the Place before named, makes the Birds among the Corn, when it was to be reaped, say the same Thing more than once to their Dam, before she bad them be gone. As for Wine *cheering* God and Man, it is a Form of Speech imitated by the Heathen, particularly by *Virgil*, *Lib. II. Georg. Ver. 101.* where speaking of noble Vines, or Wine, he saith, they were—

Mensis & Diis accepta secundis. For Wine, as the *Hebrew* Doctors note, was not only used in their Sacrifices, as it was also among the Heathen; but *Jarchi* saith, Till the Drink Offering was poured out, they did not begin the Hymn that was then sung to God. See upon *Numb. xv. 5.*

Ver. 14. *Then said all the Trees unto the Bramble, &c.*] The meanest of all Trees, good for nothing but to be burnt, aptly representing *Abimelech*, from whom they could receive no Benefit, but much Trouble and Vexation from his ambitious Cruelty.

Ver. 15. *And the Bramble said unto them, If in Truth ye anoint me King over you.*] This well sets forth *Abimelech's* Distrust of the Sincerity of the *Shechemites*; for which he had great Reason, having no Title to the Kingdom, but

the great Atchievements of his Father, and he the basest of all his Sons.

Then come and put your Trust in my Shadow.] Be assured of my Protection, if you live quietly under my Government. This represents how ridiculous *Abimelech* was, in imagining, that he should be able to maintain the Authority of a King; for a Bramble doth not spread itself so as to afford any Shelter or Shadow, it being a kind of a Thorn, which the *Hebrews* call *Atad*. From whence, as *Avenarius* observes, came the Word *Aphris* among the *Greeks*, and *Dioscorides*, the Word *αταδισμ*. And from hence he thinks was derived the Word *ῥτάω*, and *ῥτάζω*, which signify to wound, as a Thorn doth when it pricks.

And if not, let Fire come out of the Bramble.] It is a Wood that easily catches Fire, as *Forsterus* observes out of *Josephus*, *Lib. V. Antiq. Cap. 11.*

And devour the Cedars of Lebanon.] This represents the Vengeance *Abimelech* would take of the greatest of them, if they proved unfaithful to him.

Ver. 16. *Now therefore.*] Here follows *Jotham's* Application of this *Apologue*, as the *Greeks* call it, unto his Purpose.

If ye have done truly and sincerely in that ye have made Abimelech King.] If his Preferment was a righteous Act.

And ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his House, and have done unto him according to the deserving of his Hand.] And if they had requited *Gideon* and his Family, according to his Merits, which were exceeding great.

Ver. 17. *For my Father fought for you, and adventured his Life far.*] Put it in great Hazard.

And delivered you out of the Hand of Midian.] When they were sorely oppressed by them, and could not help themselves.

Ver. 18. *And ye are risen up against my Father's House this Day.*] This shews, the Men of *Shechem* consented to the Murder, and assisted *Abimelech* in it.

And have slain his Sons, Threescore and Ten Persons.] For they intended the Slaughter of *Jotham*, as much as of the rest, if he could have been found.

Upon one Stone, and have made Abimelech, the Son of his Maid Servant.] For Concubines were often put to do the Work of the House.

King over the Men of Shechem.] who could not pretend to make him King over all *Israel*: No, nor over the whole Tribe of *Ephraim*, but only of their City and Territory.

Because he is your Brother.] Without any Title to it, but because he was a Native of their City.

Ver. 19. *If you have done truly and sincerely.*] Like honest and upright Men.

With Jerubbaal and his House this Day, then rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him rejoice in you.] He wishes they may be happy in one another.

Ver. 20. *But if not, let Fire come from Abimelech, and devour the Men of Shechem, and the House of Millo.*] This is not a Prediction,

but

but an Execration or Curse, as appears from the Opposition to the foregoing Wish, and from *Ver. 57.* where it is called *Jotham's Curse*. Which was not causeless, but like that of *Jotham's* (*Josb. vi. 26.*) which was fulfilled, as this was. Not by Fire properly so called, breaking forth from *Abimelech*, but by his Rage and furious Revenge, which is fitly compared to Fire, in Allusion to what is said of the Bramble, *Ver. 15.*

And let Fire come out from the Men of Shechem, and from the House of Millo, and devour Abimelech.] He wishes they may mutually destroy each other, which came to pass by the righteous Judgment of God, who hears the Cries of the Oppressed.

Ver. 21. And Jotham ran away and fled.] As he might easily do, I have shewn upon *Deut. xxvii. 13.* The first Word signifies, he made what Haste he could away, as soon as he had done speaking; and the second, that he stopped not, till he had got to a Place of Safety.

And went to Beer, and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his Brother.] It is not certain where this Place was, whether in the Land of *Israel*, or out of it. It is probable, that it was in the Tribe of *Judah*, about eight Miles from *Eleutheropolis*, as both *Eusebius* and *S. Hierom* affirm.

Ver. 22. When Abimelech had reigned Three Years over Israel.] It is not said, Over all *Israel*, who, it cannot be thought, would submit to the ambitious Tyranny of so cruel a Man as *Abimelech* was. And if *Beer* was in the Tribe of *Judah*, we may be sure they did not own him for their King; for then *Jotham* could not have dwelt in Safety there. The Meaning therefore is, That he called himself King of *Israel*, and reigned over a great Part of them, who were so desirous of a King (it appears by their Offer made to *Gideon*) that they were content with him, rather than have none at all.

Ver. 23. And God sent an evil Spirit between Abimelech, and the Men of Shechem.] At the three Years End, I suppose, God ordered Things so in his Providence, that they grew jealous and distrustful one of another, and fell into Diffensions and Discords.

And the Men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech.] Conspired against him. So true is the Observation of *Grotius* upon these Words, that nothing is more unstable than the popular Breath, which is won by evil Arts, and that Men hate the Wickedness which hath done them Service.

Ver. 24. That the Cruelty done to the Threescore and Ten Sons of Jerubbaal might come, and their Blood be laid upon their Brother Abimelech, which slew them.] By this means God intended to punish *Abimelech* for the cruel Murder of his Brethren, whose Blood cried for Vengeance on him.

And upon the Men of Shechem, which aided him in the killing of his Brethren.] And to punish the Men of *Shechem*, who enabled him to commit that Wickedness, and helped him in it.

Ver. 25. And the Men of Shechem set Liers in

wait for him, on the Top of the Mountains.] They were not yet broken out into open Hostility against him; but there being a Misunderstanding between them, *Abimelech*, I suppose, left the City in Anger; but they thought he would return again, and thereupon set Men to lie secretly on the Top of the Mountains over which he was to pass, to seize his Person.

And they robbed all that came that Way by them.] That the Report coming to *Abimelech* his Ears (as *Arias Montanus* understands) how insecure his Subjects were, who passed that Road, he might make the more Speed, as Kings are bound to do, to clear the Way from those Thieves which infested it, and thereby give them an Opportunity to seize him.

And it was told Abimelech.] What Robberies were committed, and, perhaps, that they lay in wait for him.

Ver. 26. And Gael the Son of Ebed.] We have no Means to know who this *Gael* was, nor whence he came. *R. Solomon* thinks he was a *Gentile*, and not one of the *Jewish Nation*.

Came with his Brethren.] He passed accidentally that Way (as *P. Martyr* thinks) with his Brethren, and his Attendants, about some Business they had in that Country: But the common Opinion is, That he was a known Enemy of *Abimelech's*, who hearing the Men of *Shechem* were at Defiance with him, came to offer them his Service against him.

And the Men of Shechem put their Confidence in him.] That is, put themselves under his Protection.

Ver. 27. And they went out into the Fields, and gathered their Vineyards, and trod the Grapes.] Their first Action under this new Commander, was to go out of their City, into the Vineyards, which were in the Fields, and gather their Grapes, and press them, which they durst not do before, though the Vintage was ripe, for fear of *Abimelech*; who being told how things stood there, had raised Forces, I suppose, against them, but durst not now disturb them in their Business, they being defended by *Gael*.

And made merry.] As they were wont to do in Time of Vintage, and now especially, when they were full of Joy, in hope to be rid of *Abimelech's* Tyranny. The LXX of the *Vatican Edition*, retain the *Hebrew Word*, and translate it they made *ἑλλάλιμ*, whereby some understand Songs, as others Dances: Both are expressed by the *Vulgar*, and other Copies of the LXX have *Χόρος*; for their Merriment consisted very much in Dances, with Musick and Songs; which, as *Max. Tyrius* observes, were among the *Greeks* first used, and in Honour of *Bacchus*, when they pressed out their Grapes. See *Dr. Spencer, Lib. III. Dissert. 1. Cap. 9.*

And went into the House of their God.] It is most likely into the Temple of *Baal-berith*; there to offer their First-fruits, or such other Sacrifices as were customary at that Festival.

And did eat and drink.] Upon that Part the Sacrifices which fell to the Share of the People, who, perhaps, engaged in a Covenant against *Abimelech*.

And

And cursed Abimelech.] Some think they only scoffed at him with Taunts and Reproaches, as Men used to do in their Cups: But the LXX translate it *κατηγόσαντο*, which signifies cursing, as we translate it; that is, they wished their God would confound him. And so we translate this Word *Levit. xx. 9. Prov. xx. 20.* A marvellous Change, that they who lately gave him a great Sum of Money to advance him to the Throne, should, in that very House from whence they took it, reproach him with Imprecations of the divine Vengeance upon him.

Ver. 28. And Gael the Son of Ebed said.] In the midst of this Jollity, Gael (being elevated, I suppose, with Wine) burst forth into this insulting Language.

Who is Abimelech?] That is, he is but the Son of a Maid-Servant, *Ver. 18.*

And who is Shechem?] Some think he means, the City of Shechem is as noble as he is base: Why therefore should they be subject to him? But it seems, by what follows, to be rather the same thing repeated, *Who, I say, is the Shechemite?*

That we should serve him?] Suffer him to rule over us, and use us as he pleases.

Is he not the Son of Jerubbaal?] Who threw down the Altar of that God, whom you worship.

And Zebul his Officer.] Hath he not set one of his Servants over you, to be your Governor?

Serve the Men of Hamor the Father of Shechem.] If we must be Servants, let us restore the Dominion of the old Lords of this City, and subject ourselves to those who are descended from the antient Stock of Hamor; who was the Father, as it were, of the Shechemites.

For why should we serve him?] But what Reason can be given for our Subjection to this Upstart; who is famed for nothing, but his Ambition and Cruelty to his own Brethren? This shews pretty plainly, that R. Solomon's Opinion is true, that Gael was a Gentile; who would have been glad to see the Authority of the Canaanites restored. For tho' he suggests it only as comparatively more desirable than Abimelech's Rule over them, yet, it is likely, he thought they might as well receive their Government, as they had done their Religion.

Ver. 29. And would to God this People were under my Hand.] He wishes they would make him their King, at least their Commander in Chief: Which it seems, they had not yet resolved upon; some being still for Abimelech, and others not trusting to a Stranger.

Then would I remove Abimelech.] That he should trouble them no more; but flee the Country, as he was driven out of their City.

And he said to Abimelech, Increase thine Army, and come out.] Some take this to be only a vapouring Speech, (as if Abimelech was present) when he knew he might boast and insult without Danger, because he did not hear him: But it may as well be thought that he bid Abimelech's Friends go and tell him what he said; That he wished him to reinforce his Army, and

come out (of the Intrenchments wherein perhaps he was) and give him Battle: For he pretended to scorn to set upon him by Surprise, but desired to decide the Quarrel in open Field.

Ver. 30. And when Zebul the Ruler of the City heard the Words of Gael the Son of Ebed, his Anger was kindled.] It is likely he had carried fair (as we speak) with Gael hitherto; thinking it vain to oppose a popular Commotion, till their Fury was a little calmed; but he could not bear these insolent Thrafonical Words of Gael, which perhaps were not spoken in his Presence, but brought to him by some that heard them.

Ver. 31. And he sent Messengers unto Abimelech privily, saying.] He had some Wit in his Anger, and did not openly declare his Resentments; but gave secret Intelligence to Abimelech how Matters stood, with his Advice how to proceed against Gael.

Behold, Gael the Son of Ebed, and his Brethren, be come to Shechem.] Where, no doubt, he informed him what Entertainment he had found, and in what reviling Terms he had spoken of him.

And behold, he fortified the City against thee.] This was no Sign that Gael desired, as he boasted, to meet Abimelech in a pitched Battle; but that he rather provided for his own Defence, in case he should be assaulted.

Ver. 32. Now therefore, up by Night, thou, and the People that is with thee, and lie in wait in the Fields.] His Advice is, That for fear of Discovery, he should march with all his Forces in the Night, toward Shechem; and lurk in the Fields till Morning Light.

Ver. 33. And it shall be, that in the Morning, as soon as the Sun is up, thou shalt rise up early, and set upon the City.] Surprise them, before they were better provided.

And behold, when he and the People that are with him come out against thee.] As Gael had boasted he would do.

Then thou mayest do to them, as thou shalt find Occasion.] He could give him no farther Advice; but that then he should dispose his Forces to the best Advantage against him.

Ver. 34. And Abimelech rose up, and all the People that were with him by Night, and they laid wait against Shechem in four Companies.] He divided his Army into four Battalions, (as they now speak) and disposed them in four Places, as the Vulgar understands it: Perhaps on the East, West, North and South Sides of the City.

Ver. 35. And Gael the Son of Ebed went out.] Of his House.

And stood in the Entering of the Gate of the City.] To see, it is likely, if his Soldiers were upon their Guard.

And Abimelech rose up, and the People that were with him, from lying in wait.] Out of their lurking Places, where they had lain undiscovered all Night.

Ver. 36. And when Gael saw the People, he said to Zebul.] Who, it seems, accompanied him, or, as Governor of the City, was there to see every one do their Duty.

Behold,

Behold, there come People down from the Top of the Mountains.] Which were adjoining to the City, viz. Mount Gerezim and Mount Ebal.

And Zebul said, Thou seest the Shadow of the Mountains, as if they were Men.] It being early in the Morning, the Trees, and all Things else, cast long Shadows, which being moved by the Breath of Air, which commonly accompanies the Sun-rising, Zebul persuaded him he took for Men marching down from the Top of the Mountains. Some think he spake this in Mockery, that he was afraid of Shadows; but delivered it in such a serious Tone, that Gael believed he spake in Earnest; by which it is plain that Zebul notably dissembled his Re-
sentments, and behaved himself as if he was on Gael's Side; who was strangely infatuated, to trust one that was Servant to Abimelech, and placed by him as Governor of the City, whose Pretences of Friendship were reasonably to be suspected.

Ver. 37. And Gael spake again and said, See.] Observe attentively.

There come down People by the Middle of the Land.] Now it was visible they were Men; for they were come down to the Middle of the Mountains.

And another Company come along by the Plain of Meonenim.] It is likely the other two Companies of the Four, into which his Forces were divided, appeared in other Places, the more to distract the Thoughts of Gael: And it is probable that Abimelech had seized the Ambush, which they had laid for him on the Top of the Mountains (*Ver. 25.*) that they could carry no Tidings of his Coming. We read of this Place no where else, and so I can give no Account of it: But the *Vulgar* takes *Elon* to signify not the Plain, but an Oak; and translates these Words, *By the Way which looks towards the Oak*; which, in some Copies of the LXX, are rendered, *The Oak of those that look towards, or that regard Times*, as we have it in the Margin of our Bibles; as if it were like the Oak at *Dodona*, among the *Greeks*, where they made Divinations.

Ver. 38. Then said Zebul unto him, Where is now thy Mouth, wherewith thou saidst, Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him?] Now Zebul pulls off his Mask, and puts him in mind of the Brags which he made, Ver. 28.

Is not this the People that thou hast despised?] But now, he supposes, was afraid to encounter.

Go out, I pray thee, and fight with them.] He upbraids him with Cowardise, unless he now shewed himself a Man with his Sword, as the other Day with his Tongue.

Ver. 39. And Gael went out.] It may seem strange that he did not first leave Zebul dead upon the Spot behind him: But he was afraid of him, he ving, as appeared afterward, a strong Party in the City; and it was dangerous to have two Enemies to deal withal, one without, and another within.

Before the Men of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech.] As unprovided as he was, he would

not decline the Fight, and was followed by the principal Persons in *Shechem*.

Ver. 40. And Abimelech chased him, and he fled before him.] Toward the City.

And many were overthrown and wounded.] Some were killed, and others wounded.

Even unto the Entering of the Gate.] Where the rest, and Gael himself, got into the City, and there secured themselves: So the *Vulgar*, for Explication sake, *He pursued him and drove him into the City.*

Ver. 41. And Abimelech dwelt at Arumah.] It appears, by the next Verse, this Place was not far from *Shechem*; whither Abimelech thought fit to retreat, and there watch for an Opportunity to be revenged of the *Shechemites*.

And Zebul thrust out Gael and his Brethren, that they should not dwell in Shechem.] Because they were not able to defend it against Abimelech. Zebul had the stronger Party on his Side, otherwise he could not have expelled him; but Gael had so many Adherents, that they durst not put him to Death, for his ill Management, as no doubt they called it, in the late Fight.

Ver. 42. And it came to pass, on the Morrow, that the People went out into the Field.] Finding that Abimelech was retreated, as not strong enough, they imagined, to assault their City, they went about their Business into the Field; which, at that Time of the Year, after the Vintage, was to Plough and Sow their Lands, and Dress their Vines, and other Trees: Some will have it, that they went out to fight Abimelech again, which is not probable.

And they told Abimelech.] He wanted not some to carry him Intelligence of it.

Ver. 43. And he took the People.] His Forces, which lay in and about *Arumah*.

And divided them into three Companies.] One of which (the next Verse informs us) he commanded himself, and committed the other two to the Conduct of their Commanders.

And laid wait in the Field.] With that Company which he commanded, whom he ordered to lie close, and not discover themselves.

And looked, and behold, the People were come forth out of the City.] He set some to spy when the People were come out, and set about their Businesses.

And he rose up against them, and smote them.] His Men came, on a sudden, out of their Ambush, and killed many of them.

Ver. 44. And Abimelech, and the Company which was with him, rushed forward, and stood in the Entering of the Gate of the City.] Made all the Haste they could to get between them and home: And accordingly they posted themselves at the Entering of the Gate of the City; whereby they hindered those in the Field from getting into it, and likewise those in the City from coming out to their Relief: So that they were dispersed about the Fields, where the other two Companies picked them up, as it here follows.

And the two Companies ran upon all the People that were in the Fields, and slew them.] Which was a great disheartening, no doubt, to those in
the

the City to see so many of their Fellow-Citizens cut off.

Ver. 45. *And Abimelech fought against the City all that Day.*] Having destroyed so many of the Citizens in the Morning, he made his Battery against the City itself, the rest of the Day.

And took it.] In the Evening, I suppose, either by an Assault, or by Surrender.

And slew the People that were therein.] It is not said what became of Zebul, who, it is likely, went over to him, and directed him in his Attack upon the City; leaving his own Party, in whom he put no Confidence, to perish with the rest.

And he beat down the City.] Laid the Houses and Walls level with the Ground.

And sowed it with Salt.] Salt makes Land barren, and therefore *Rabag* refers this to the Ground about it or in it; that was wont to be employed for sowing any sort of Grain, or planting Vineyards, &c. for as *Pliny* observes, *Omnis locus in quo reperitur sal, sterilis est & nihil gignit.* Lib. 31. Cap. 7. *All Places in which Salt is found, are barren, and bring fourth nothing.* Therefore *Abimelech* endeavoured to make this City a perpetual Desolation.

See *Bochart. Hierozoicon*, Pag. 1. Lib. 3. Cap. xvi. But unless the Soil had been salt of itself, his sowing Salt there would not have made it barren; but it would have soon recovered its Fruitfulness: Therefore all he intended was to shew his Hatred of them, by wishing their City might lie waste, and be a perpetual Desolation.

Ver. 46. *And when all the Men of the Tower of Shechem heard that.*] By these last Words, it is plain this Tower was not in the City, but at some Distance from it: For otherwise, it would not have been said that they heard of the Destruction of *Shechem*, but that they saw it with their Eyes; yet it is likely, that this Tower of *Shechem* was kept by a Garrison of the *Shechemites*.

They entred into an Hold of the House of the God Berith.] They durst not trust to the Strength of the Tower, but took Sanctuary rather in a strong Fortrefs of the Temple of the God mentioned Ver. 4. which was built, in all likelihood, (according to the common Custom of the World) upon one of the Mountains hard by, and had near it this fortified strong Hold; wherein they kept their Treasure, Ver. 4. It may be compared to the *Roman Capitol*, and to the Temple of *Jerusalem*, in After-times; which *Josephus* describes as an impregnable Place.

Ver. 47. *And it was told Abimelech, that all the Men of the Tower of Shechem were gathered together.*] In the forenamed Fortrefs.

Ver. 48. *And Abimelech got him up to Mount Zalmon, he and all the People that were with him.*] Some think this to be the same Mountain which the Psalmist mentions lxviii. 15. and take it to have been near to *Shechem*, which had many Mountains about it, Ver. 36.

And Abimelech took an Ax in his Hand, and cut down a Bough from the Trees.] Which grew there in great abundance, for *Zalmon* seems to

have had its Name from the Shadiness of the Place.

And took it and laid it on his Shoulders, and said unto the People that were with him, What ye have seen me do, make haste and do as I have done.] He, in some measure, imitates his Father's Speech to his three hundred Men, before he went to fight, vii. 17.

Ver. 49. *And the People likewise cut down every Man his Bough, and followed Abimelech, and put them to the Hold, and set the Hold on Fire upon them.*] Which was done with such Expedition, (as he ordered in the foregoing Verse) that they within had no Time to provide against it.

So that all the Men of the Tower of Shechem died also, about a Thousand Men and Women.] Who perished in the Fire and Smoak, as the *Vulgar* here adds: But the *Hebrew* and LXX say nothing of Smoak, but only of Fire; yet it is highly probable that many were choaked by the Smoak, which was very great and smothering, the Wood being green: Here the Prediction, or rather Imprecation of *Jotham*, Ver. 20. was exactly fulfilled.

Ver. 50. *Then went Abimelech unto Thebez, and encamped against Thebez, and took it.*] This was a City, which, as *Kimchi* observes, had revolted from *Abimelech*; but it is uncertain whereabout it lay, though most think it in the Territory near *Shechem*.

Ver. 51. *But there was a strong Tower within the City, and thither fled all the Men and Women, and all they of the City.*] It was a Place so large, that it could contain not only all the Men of the City and their Wives, but their Servants also: Who all betook themselves hither, as a Place, not easy to be taken, though the City could make little Resistance.

And shut it to them] Shut to the Gate, and, I suppose, blocked it up so that it could not be opened.

And gat them up to the Top of the Tower.] Which was flat, as their Houses were, with Battlements, round about it: Here the Besieged thought fit to stand in great Numbers, that they might do what they could to beat him off, if *Abimelech* attempted to burn them, as he had done others in a neighbouring Tower.

Ver. 52. *And Abimelech came into the Tower and fought against it.*] His Rage was insatiable; for, not content to have overthrown the *Shechemites*, and beat down their City, and burnt their strong Hold, and taken *Thebez*, he beset their Tower also; where, if he had not perished, none can tell how far his Revenge would have proceeded.

And went hard unto the Door of the Tower to burn it with Fire.] Being flushed with great Success, he was so bold and hardy, as himself to make this dangerous Attempt.

Ver. 53. *And a certain Woman cast a Piece of a Millstone.*] Which they had carried up among other Stones and Logs, and whatsoever they thought might offend the Enemy: The *Hebrew* Word *Rechab* properly signifies the upper Millstone, which moves (and, as it were, rides) upon the Lower.

Upon Abimelech's Head.] Being directed, no doubt, by a special Providence of God, as the Stone was out of the Sling that killed Goliath, and the Arrow wherewith Abab was shot.

And all to break his Scull.] Made such a Fracture in it, that he concluded it to be mortal. Thus *Plutarch* relates that *Pyrrhus*, at the Siege of *Thebes*, was killed by a Woman, who threw a Tile upon his Head: But *Abimelech's* Death by a Stone is the more remarkable, because it carried some Stamp of his Sin upon it; for he slew all his Brethren on one Stone.

Ver. 54. *Then he called hastily.]* Fearing he should immediately expire.

Unto the young Man his Armour-bearer, and said unto him, Draw thy Sword and slay me, that Men say not of me, a Woman slew him.] Tho' he knew she had given him his Death's Wound, yet he would have Posterity think otherwise; for he thought it dishonourable to die by the Hand of a Woman: A foolish Piece of Vain-glory, wherewith he concluded his Life, as he had led it; for she had given him a mortal Blow.

And his young Man thrust him through, and he died.] Just when he imagined he was upon the point of conquering all Opposition to him.

Ver. 55. *And when the Men of Israel.]* That is, all that were in his Army.

Saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed every Man unto his Place.] Disbanded themselves, having none to head them.

Ver. 56. *Thus God rendered the Wickedness of Abimelech which he did unto his Father in slaying his Seventy Brethren.]* Which was as much as in him lay, to root out the Memory of his Father, unless it survived in himself, who took a Course to make his Name infamous.

Ver. 57. *And all the Evil of the Men of Shechem did God render upon their Heads, and upon them came the Curse of Jotham the Son of Jerubbaal.]* These two Verses conclude this Story with a Divine Admonition, That no Man should think that such Things came to pass by Chance, but God, the Judge of all, punished both *Abimelech* and the Men of *Shechem* according to their Deserts, and made them the Instruments of each other's Destruction: And it is remarkable that this Punishment overtook them speedily, within less than four Years after their Crime was committed.

It was not the Business of this Holy Writer to tell us what became of *Jotham*, no more than what became of *Gael* and *Zebul*: But only to shew, that as Men have done, so God requites them; with which he ends this Part of his History.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *AND after Abimelech.]* Who was not a Judge, much less appointed by God, but an Usurper, who took upon him to alter the Divine Government, and made himself a King.

There rose up.] It is not said that God stirred

him up, as he did the foregoing Judges; but it is so understood, because God would not have saved *Israel* by one that took upon him this high Office, without his Order: And therefore, as *Peter Martyr* well observes, in the Conclusion of the foregoing Chapter, that as after many good Judges God had given them, he suffered the cruel Tyrant *Abimelech* to interpose himself, that their Virtues might shine more illustriously by his Wickedness; so after he was gone, God was pleased to raise up to them good Judges again, who learnt Moderation by the Punishment of his vain Ambition: And in all likelihood, the dreadful End of *Abimelech*, and his Partakers, who made him King, affrighted the *Israelites* from presuming to make another, of their own Heads.

To defend Israel.] Or, to save, as it is in the Margin: For this was the great Office of a Judge, to deliver the People from the Oppression of their Enemies: We do not find indeed from what Enemies they were delivered by this Judge; but they may be said to save and deliver, who preserve Mens Liberties from being invaded, as well as they that vindicate and restore them, when they are lost: And therefore we well translate it, *To defend Israel*. He may be thought also to have delivered them from those Confusions and Disorders they were in, by the Disagreement between *Abimelech* and those that made him King: For both Sides had many Partakers, which made great Divisions, and dangerous Combinations among the People; but were all happily ended by the prudent Management of this Governor. *Serrarius* also adds, That he might be said to save or deliver them, because he restored the Purity of their Religion, by abolishing the Worship of Idols: For we read, That after the Death of *Gideon* they went a whoring after *Baalim*, and made *Baal-berith* their God, viii. 33. which they continued in the Reign of *Abimelech*; but were now brought back to the Worship of the true God, and remained in it, in the Days of this and the following Judges; otherwise there would not have been Occasion to say (Ver. 6.) that after the Death of *Jair*, the Children of *Israel* did Evil again in the Sight of the LORD: But how far this is true, will appear upon Ver. 8.

Tolah the Son of Puab, the Son of Dodo.] So the *Chaldee* Paraphrast understands the Word *Dodo*, to be the proper Name of his Grandfather, as *Puab* was of his Father: But there are those that by *Dodo* understand his Uncle, viz. *Abimelech* fore-mentioned: Which seems to me unreasonable; for he was of another Tribe, and his Relation to such a Man no good Qualification, one would think, for this great Trust.

A Man of Issachar.] A mean Tribe; which did not hinder his Advancement by God to the highest Dignity: And by this Expression, a Man of *Issachar*, he seems to have been of no great Family, in that Tribe.

And he dwelt in Shamir in Mount Ephraim.] After he was made a Judge, he settled in this Place, for the Convenience of the People; it being in the midst of the Land.

Ver. 2.

Ver. 2. *And he judged Israel twenty and three Years, and died and was buried in Shamir.*] There are no memorable Acts of his recorded; for the principal Intention of the Holy Writer of this Book, was to shew what great Calamities befel the *Israelites* when they forsook God's Worship, and how graciously he delivered them in a marvellous manner, when they returned to it: As I suppose they did, in the Beginning of this Man's Government, and continued stedfast therein; so that they were not infested by their Enemies.

Ver. 3. *And after him arose Fair a Gileadite, and judged Israel twenty and two Years.*] This is the first Judge that was raised up from among those that lived beyond *Jordan*.

Ver. 4. *And he had thirty Sons that rode on thirty Asses Colts.*] For the noblest Persons rode on these Beasts (see *Ver. 10.*) and that not only in *Judæa*, but in *Arabia*, and in other Countries, even among the *Romans*, as *Bochartus* hath at large observed in his *Hierozyicon*, Pag. 1. Lib. II. Cap. 13. And it is highly probable, that this is here mentioned, because these Persons were ordered by their Father to ride Circuit up and down the Country, to minister Justice according to the Law; as *Samuel* did when he judged *Israel*, 1 *Sam. vii. 16.* For the Courts of Judicature appointed by the Law (*Deut. xvi. 18.*) were not yet settled; nor, in all Likelihood, settled in every City, till the Days of *Jehoshaphat*, as *Mr. Thorndike* observes in his *Rights of the Church*, Chap. iv. Pag. 226.

And they had thirty Cities.] Of which they were the Governors, as the *Vulgar* understands it.

Which are called Havoth-Fair unto this Day.] This *Fair*, as our most learned Primate of *Ireland* observes in his *Annals*, (ad A. M. 3504.) was of the Posterity of that *Fair* who called the Cities which he took in *Argob*, by his own Name *Havoth-Fair*, the Towns or Villages of *Fair* (*Numb. xxxii. 41. Deut. iii. 14.*) After whose Example these thirty Sons of this younger *Fair* (who to distinguish him from the Elder, seems to be called *Bedan*, 1 *Sam. xii. 11. 1 Chron. vii. 17.*) called these Cities which they possessed, by the very same Name.

Which are in the Land of Gilead.] In the same Country, where the other Cities antiently called by this Name lay: From which, it is likely, they were distinguished by some such Addition as this, *The new Havoth-Fair*.

Ver. 5. *And Fair died, and was buried in Camon.*] Which, it was probable, was the Place where he dwelt, while he judged *Israel*.

Ver. 6. *And the Children of Israel did Evil again in the Sight of the LORD.*] Or, as the forenamed Primate thinks it must be interpreted, *Had done Evil again*, &c. as was said *viii. 33.* and now is repeated to shew the Cause, why God delivered them up into the Hands of their Enemies: For he supposes this was before the Death of *Fair*, as I shall note on *Ver. 8.*

And served Baalim and Ashtaroth.] As they had frequently done in former Times, *ii. 13. iii. 7, &c.*

VOL. II.

And the Gods of Syria.] They added to their former Idolatries, the Worship of new Gods; particularly those of *Syria*, which were, as *Mr. Selden* observes, (in his *Prolegomena* to his Book *de Diis Syris*) beside *Bel*, or *Baal*, and *Astarte*, *Dagon*, *Moloch*, and *Thammuz*.

And the Gods of Zidon.] Their supreme Gods were *Baal* and *Ashtoreth*, as the same great Man observes, (in his 2. *Syntagma de Diis Syris*, Cap. 2.) But it is likely they had more, such as *Asharo*, *Afarim*, and *Afarab*; being the very same with *Ashtoreth*.

And the Gods of Moab.] The principal of which was *Chemosh*, 1 *Kings xi. 7.*

And the Gods of the Children of Ammon.] The Chief of which was *Milcom*, 1 *Kings xi. 5.* where *Ashtoreth* is mentioned as the Goddess of the *Zidonians*.

And the Gods of the Philistines.] They had more, it seems, beside *Dagon*; whose Names are not mentioned in Scripture.

And forsook the LORD, and served not him.] Their Hearts were possessed with the Love of so many Gods, that they quite forgot the LORD, and did not worship him at all; though they were wont formerly only to worship other Gods together with him. This was such a strange Apostasy, that one cannot but enquire into the Reason of it, and (besides what I have noted upon *ii. 12.*) one Reason may possibly have been, That the solemn Reading of the Law to all the People, once in Seven Years, was neglected: For we do not read that it was publicly done from the Time of *Joshua* to the Reign of *Jehoshaphat*, which was above Five Hundred Years: It doth not follow indeed that it was not done, because it is not recorded; but if we consider how prone they were to return to Idolatry, after the Death of every Judge, and how soon after the Death of *David* (even in the Reign of his Son *Solomon*) it began to appear among them, it may incline one to think there was not sufficient Care taken about this Matter.

Ver. 7. *And the Anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the Hands of the Philistines, and into the Hands of the Children of Ammon.*] Two of those Nations, whose Gods they chose to serve.

Ver. 8. *And that Year they vexed and oppressed the Children of Israel.*] That is the *Ammonites* vexed them in the East, (as we are told in the Conclusion of the Verse) while the *Philistines* vexed them in the West: For their Idolatry being strangely increased, so was their Punishment, by the Invasion of their Enemies on both Sides, as the foregoing Verse tells us; which is a Preface to the following Histories of their Oppression by the *Philistines* and the *Ammonites*, both at the same Time; but, to avoid Confusion, he first relates the Story of the *Ammonites*, who are at last named in the foregoing Verse.

Eighteen Years.] Their Invasion began in the same Year, but they did not end at the same Time, for the *Ammonites* domincered over them only Eighteen Years; but the *Philistines* Forty, *xiii. 1.* I must not here omit the Con-

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struction which our Primate *Usher* makes of these Words, which run thus in the *Hebrew*, and he translates in this manner, *They vexed and oppressed the Children of Israel that Year, (viz.) the eighteenth Year.* For the Oppression, he thinks, began the Fifth Year of *Jair*, and continued till the Twenty-second, which was his last. See his *Chronol. Sacra*, Pag. 1. Cap. 13. But this is said only to solve a Difficulty, which is, that if we suppose this Oppression to have begun after the Death of *Jair*, and to have lasted Eighteen Years (as our Translation imports) it will be impossible to make the Years of the Government of the Judges agree with what we read 1 *Kings* vi. 1. That *Solomon* began to build the Temple at *Jerusalem*, in the Four Hundred and Eightieth Year after they came out of *Egypt*: But there is a more easy Way of accounting for this Difficulty, by supposing that several of the Judges were Contemporaries, as will be apparent in this very History, (see upon xi. 25) and if we do not take these Words *Eighteen Years* to signify the Continuance of the *Ammonitish* Oppression, it is no where mentioned any where else; as the Duration of all other Oppressions is.

All the Children of Israel that were on the other Side Jordan in the Land of the Amorites.] Which belonged to the *Amorites*, till *Moses* dispossessed them, (*Numb.* xxi.) and gave the Land to the two Tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad*, and half the Tribe of *Manasseh*.

Which is in Gilead.] The principal Part of which was *Gilead*; out of which *Jair* sprang, being of the Tribe of *Manasseh*: Who, like a good Man, used all his Endeavours to purge the *Israelites* from Idolatry; as *Tola*, I suppose, had done before: But they being, after the Death of *Gideon*, fallen from God, and continuing in their Idolatry all the Reign of *Abimelech*, our fore-named Primate supposes these Judges were not able to reform them; but they rather grew worse, as is related, *Ver.* 6. And therefore God permitted the *Ammonites* and *Philistines* to begin to afflict them, as was said before in the Fifth Year of *Jair*; but not so as to make them subject to their Power: For *Jair* held the Government Eighteen Years after they began their Inroads, but then their Vexations and Oppressions grew intolerable, and they not only afflicted his own Country *Gilead*, but endeavoured to make their Brethren, on the other Side *Jordan*, to feel the Weight of their Power, as it follows in the next Verse. This is said very plausibly, but cannot be admitted without some Violence to the natural Sense of the Beginning of the Verse; and also to the Course of this History, which doth not mention their Departure from God, and these Oppressions of their Enemies, on both Sides, till after the Death of *Jair*.

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So that Israel was sore distressed.] For while the *Ammonites* afflicted those Countries in the

Eastern Part of *Canaan*, the *Philistines* made Ravages in the Countries of *Zebulun*, and *Asher*, and the rest of the Tribes that lay on the Western Coast: For so the LXX explain those Words in the foregoing Verse, *In that Year, ἐν τῷ καίρῳ ἐκείνῳ*, in that same Year, the *Philistines* in the West, and the *Ammonites* in the East, vexed and oppressed the Children of *Israel*.

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Did not I deliver you from the Egyptians?] *Exod.* xii.

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And from the Philistines.] In the Days of *Sargon*, iii. ult.

Ver. 12. *The Zidonians also.*] We never read of any Invasion they made upon the *Israelites*; but only in general, That God left them, among other People, unsubdued, to prove the Children of *Israel*, iii. 3. who took their Opportunities, in all likelihood, to afflict them.

And the Amalekites.] Who joined both with the *Moabites*, and the *Midianites*, to oppress them, iii. 13. vi. 3.

And the Maonites did oppress you.] *Maon* is the Name of a Nation; the Plural of which, *Meunim*, occurs in many Places, particularly in 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 6, 7. where they are called in Greek Μίναροι. A People of *Arabia*, both in that which we call *Felix*, and in that called *Deserta*. Which latter was not far from the *Moabites* and the *Ammonites*; with whom Interpreters are wont to confound the *Meunites*, as if by a Transposition of Letters, they were the same with the *Ammonites*: Which hath misled us in our Translation of those Words 2 *Chron.* xx. 1. *And with them from the Ammonites*, which make no Sense; but if we read *with them from Menuim* (as it is in Greek ἐκ Μιναιμ) all runs clearly, and makes perfect Sense: And thus we ought to translate that Place, 1 *Chron.* iv. 41. where we take *Meunim* to signify Dwellings, and render the Words thus, *The Habitations which were found there*; as if where there were *Tents* (which are mentioned before) there were not *Habitations*, which are the same: Therefore *Meunim* is the Name of a People (as the LXX understood it) who dwelt in *Tents*, being *Arabians*: Who being Neighbours (as I said to the *Moabites* and *Ammonites*) joined with them in their Invasion of the Land of *Israel*, and helped to oppress them: But they are

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C H A P. XI.

Ver. 1. *NOW Jephthab the Gileadite.*] A Man of the same Country with *Jair*, their last Judge.

Was a mighty Man of Valour.] A warlike Person, of great Courage and Conduct.

And he was the Son of an Harlot.] Or, *But he was*, &c. Some, by the Hebrew Word *Zonah*, understand a Concubine, but it never signifies so in Scripture; but, as we translate it, an *Harlot*; and sometimes one that kept a *Publick House*; for such People were wont to make their Bodies as common as their Houses, to all Comers. See *Josh. ii. 1*. But several of the Hebrew Doctors think that this Word may signify either one of another Tribe, or a Stranger, one of another Nation: And so *Josephus* himself here understands it, that he was ξένος παρὰ τὴν μητέρα, *A Stranger by his Mother's Side*. And *Saidas Batricides* saith, his Mother was an *Ismaelite*, as Mr. *Selden* observes, *Lib. de Successionibus*, Cap. 3. Now such were called νόθαι by the Greeks, as *Grotius* observes, who were born of a Wife that was not a Citizen. But among the *Jews*, if such Persons embraced the Law, their Children were not stained, but capable to inherit among the rest of their Brethren; and therefore *Jephthab* complains of his Expulsion, *Ver. 7*. looking upon himself as unjustly dealt withal, which could not have been said, had he been a Bastard.

And Gilead begat Jephthab.] One of the Posterity of *Gilead*, the Son of *Manasseh*, was his Father, who was called after the Name of his great Ancestor.

Ver. 2. *And Gilead's Wife bare him Sons.*] He took a Wife also of the *Jewish Nation*, who bare him several Sons.

And his Wife's Sons grew up, and they thrust out Jephthab.] When his Father was dead; for till then, the Inheritance was not to be divided; and, if he had been alive, he would not have suffered them to be so injurious to *Jephthab*, who was the Son of a Wife whom he loved extremely, as *Josephus* relates, *Lib. 5. Antiq. Cap. 9*.

And said unto him, Thou shalt not inherit in our Father's House.] Have no Share of his Estate.

For thou art the Son of a strange Woman.] This explains the Word *Zonah*, to be the same with a *Woman of another Country*; for there is no reason to think, that by *another Woman* (as the Words are in the Hebrew) he means a Woman of another Tribe, as the *Chaldee Paraphrast*, *R. Bechai*, and others, expound it. See *Selden* in the Place before named, and *Buxtorf*, *de Sponsal. & Divortiis*, P. 61.

Ver. 3. *Then Jephthab fled from his Brethren.*] When they were so unkind as to drive him from his Father's House, he did not think fit to stay in their Country.

And dwelt in the Land of Tob.] We read no where else of this Country, which, it is likely, was not far from *Gilead*, upon the Borders of the *Ammonites*, in the Entrance of *Arabia de-*

ferta; or, perhaps, it is the same with the Country called *Isb-tob* (2 *Sam. viii. 6, 8*.) which was in *Syria*, and so near the *Ammonites*, that they hired Forces from thence, as well as from other *Syrians*, to fight with King *David*. We find some Foot-steps of this Land, it is very probable, in the second Book of *Maccabees*, Chap. xii. 17. where we read of Τεβήνοι Ἰσδαῖοι, i. e. *Jews* who dwelt in the Land of *Tob*.

And there were gathered vain Men to Jephthab.] Or, *Empty Men*; for the Word *Rekim* signifies poor and needy Persons, Men of no Estates; such as resorted to *David* when he fled from *Saul*, 1 *Sam. xxii. 2*. So I suppose it to be here understood, (not that they were profligate Persons) for the Word *Pochazim*, light Men, is not here added, as it is in the Story of those who followed *Abimelech*, ix. 4. Therefore *Grotius* doth not seem rightly to have represented *Jephthab*, when he saith, He was one of those who *ex prædonum Ducibus justi Duces facti sunt*. *Lib. 3. de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. 3. Sect. 3. For these were not Highway-Men, as we call them, that lived by Prey; but only Men of small or no Fortune, who were glad of an Occasion to join themselves to so gallant a Man as *Jephthab* was. And so the Word we translate *gathered*, imports, that they lifted themselves under him of their own Accord, being invited to it by the great Fame of his Humanity and Valour. But *Grotius* herein follows the *Vulgar*, who adds the Word *Latrocinates*, without any Authority, either from the *Hebrew*, *Chaldee*, or *LXX*.

And went out with him.] Made Excursions upon the Enemies of the *Israelites* thereabouts, and got what Booty they could from them, for their Subsistence, just as *David* did when he was forced to flee into the Land of the *Philistines*, 1 *Sam. xxvii. 8, 9, 10, 11*.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass in Process of Time.*] In the Hebrew it is, *after Days*, i. e. as *Primate Usher* understands it (in the Place above-named) after those Years mentioned, x. 8. viz. Eighteen Years, in the Conclusion of which, when *Jair* was dead, the *Ammonites* took the following Resolution; but there is no good Ground, as I have shewn there, for this Interpretation: Therefore by *after Days*, I understand, some Time after their Retreat into their own Country, which I mentioned x. 17.

That the Children of Ammon made War against Israel.] They only came in Parties before, to rob and spoil them; but now finding the *Israelites* began to take Courage, and had formed a Camp in *Gilead*, x. 17. they raised an Army, intending to conquer them, and possess themselves of their Country.

Ver. 5. *And it came to pass, when the Children of Ammon made War against Israel.*] The *Vulgar* interprets it, *Pressed hard upon them*.

The Elders of Gilead.] Who are called Princes, x. 18.

Went to fetch Jephthab out of the Land of Tob.] Some of the principal Persons of the Country, were sent in the Name of all the Inhabitants of *Gilead*, in an Embassy to him, to invite him to return to them.

Ver. 6. *And they said unto Jephthah, Come and be our Captain, that we may fight with the Children of Ammon.*] They did not pretend to make him their King, (remembering, perhaps, what had befallen the Men of Shechem and Abimelech) but only the Leader of their Army.

Ver. 7. *And Jephthah said unto the Elders of Gilead, Did ye not hate me, and expel me out of my Father's House?*] This signifies, that his Brethren ejected him, by the Assistance of the publick Authority (unless we suppose that they were of the Number of Elders, that were sent to him;) or the Elders, who saw the Wrong his Brethren did him, connived at it, and did not interpose, according to their Office, to do him Right, whereby they made his Expulsion their own Act.

And why are ye come unto me now, when you are in Distress?] As much as to say, What Reason have you to expect that I should hearken to you, since I know it is only your Distress, which moves you to recal me?

Ver. 8. *And the Elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, Therefore we turn again to thee now.*] This may relate either to what immediately goes before, and then the Sense is, We confess we are in Distress, and therefore implore thy Help, (which, if thou wilt afford us, thou shalt command us all for ever;) or to the Beginning of the foregoing Verse, and the Meaning is, We are sensible of the Injury that was done thee, and therefore are come to repair it, by inviting thee to be our Head; for that is meant by their *turning again to him*: They had altered their Mind, and not only revoked that unjust Act, but offered him a Recompence.

That thou mayest go with us, and fight against the Children of Ammon, and be our Head over all the Inhabitants of Gilead.] Of the Tribes on their Side Jordan; for they could promise nothing for the Tribes in the Land of Canaan, some of which were oppressed now by the Philistines, as they were by the Ammonites.

Ver. 9. *And Jephthah said unto the Elders of Gilead, If ye bring me home again, to fight against the Children of Ammon, and the LORD deliver them before me, shall I be your Head?*] He offers to be the General of their Army, if, after he had vanquished their Enemies, they would, in good Earnest, make him their Governor in Chief, and not throw him off, when they had no further Need of him. In which Agreement, he supposed, the Consent and Appointment of God, by whose Aid alone he hoped to be victorious.

Ver. 10. *And the Elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, The LORD be Witness between us, if we do not according to thy Word.*] They solemnly call God to witness their Sincerity, confirming what was agreed by an Oath, and wishing God to revenge it, if they did not perform what they promised.

Ver. 11. *Then Jephthah went with the Elders of Gilead.*] Unto his own Country.

And the People made him Head and Captain over them.] In a full Assembly of the People, with the Princes, ix. 6. x. 18. he was made General of their Army; with an Assurance, he

should be their Head, after the War was successfully ended.

And Jephthah uttered all his Words before the LORD.] The People had done their Part, but Jephthah would undertake nothing, without God's Approbation, before whom, in a solemn Prayer, he laid all that he had said unto them; and, it is likely, that God answered him by some Prophet, and authorized him to undertake the Conduct and Government of the People, (See x. 11.) for if he had done it without a divine Warrant, *the Spirit of the LORD* would not have come upon him, as we read it did, Ver. 29.

In Mizpeh.] Where the Children of Israel had gathered themselves together to oppose the Ammonites, x. 17. and where Jephthah chose to fix his Habitation, after the Conquest of them, Ver. 34. of this Chapter; for that Mizpeh where all the Tribes, we often read, met before the LORD, was on this Side Jordan, not far from Jerusalem, either in the Tribe of Judah, or of Benjamin. It is thought probable, by some learned Men, that there was some *Proseucha*, a Praying-Place, or Place of divine Worship, here at Mizpah (See Josh. xxiv. 26.) where Jephthah uttered his Words; which otherwise, they think, could not be said to be done *before the LORD*: But this is not a sufficient Ground for such an Opinion; for the divine Presence (as Rasi here observes) was in that Place where all the People assembled upon a publick Concern. See 1 Sam. xi. 15. Kimchi observes the same upon the twentieth Chapter of this Book, Ver. 1. where his Words are, *In every Place, in which Israel, or a great Part of it, is assembled, the divine Presence dwells.* See my Notes there.

Ver. 12. *And Jephthah sent Messengers to the King of the Children of Ammon.*] Now he plainly acts as a Chief Governor, in appointing an Embassy to go from him to the King of the Ammonites; which Power he would not have assumed, if it had not been given him by God.

Saying, What hast thou to do with me.] That is, What is the Ground of thy Quarrel? Or, For what Reason is this Invasion made?

That thou art come to fight against me in my Land?] This is the Language of the supreme Governor of the Country, unto whom all were subject, as their Lord; and demonstrates him to have been a most pious Prince, that would first debate Matters fairly, before he came to Blows, according to the Sense of a Number of great Men in future Times, mentioned by Grotius at large, Lib. II. de Jure Belli & Pacis, Cap. 23. Sect. 7. Unto which he was not bound, having taken Arms only in his own Defence; yet to prevent the Effusion of Blood, he argues the Case with the King of the Ammonites, who ought rather, if he thought himself injured by the Israelites, to have sent, before he took Arms, to require Satisfaction.

Ver. 13. *And the King of the Children of Ammon answered to the Messengers of Jephthah, Because Israel took away my Land, when they came out of Egypt.*] This is a mere Colour and Pretence, the Land being none of theirs, when the

the *Israelites* conquered it, but the Land of *Sibon*, King of the *Amorites*: For as to the Country of the *Ammonites*, God expressly charged the *Israelites* not to meddle with it, (*Deut.* i. 19.) for he would give them none of it. It is true, this Land, which they now claimed, had formerly belonged to the *Moabites*, but *Sibon* had made a Conquest of it, and driven them out of it, as we read *Numb.* xxi. 26. The King of *Ammon* therefore could not call it his Land, unless he was also King of *Moab* at this Time, which is not improbable: Whence it is, that in the following Dispute between him and *Jephthab*, there is a promiscuous Mention of the *Moabites* together with the *Ammonites*, as if they were but one People, *Ver.* 15, 17, 18. and *Chemosh*, which was the God of the *Moabites*, is called, *Ver.* 24. the God of the King of *Ammon*: Unto which may be added, that the Land which *Sibon* conquered, did not entirely belong to the *Moabites*, but some of it to the Children of *Ammon*, as is expressly said *Josb.* xiii. 25. where we read, that to the *Gadites* was given half of the Land of the Children of *Ammon*; therefore some Part of *Sibon's* Kingdom (where the *Gadites* were settled) had formerly belonged to the *Ammonites*.

From *Arnon* even unto *Jabbok*, and to *Jordan*.] These are the Bounds of the Country to which they laid a Claim; the River *Arnon* on the South, and the Brook *Jabbok* on the North, (which we may call the Length of the Country) and *Jordan* on the West; upon which afterward is added the Eastern Bounds, when it is said, *Ver.* 22. from the Wilderness unto *Jordan*; which is the Wilderness through which the *Israelites* entered into the Territories of *Sibon*.

Now therefore restore these Lands.] Which belonged to the *Moabites* and *Ammonites*.

Again peaceably.] The Messengers of *Jephthab* had declared that he desired not War, but Peace; which the King of *Ammon* tells him he must not expect, unless he resigned these Countries to him.

Ver. 14. And *Jephthab* sent Messengers again to the King of the Children of *Ammon*.] This is an Argument of a very peaceable Disposition, and an high Commendation of a warlike Spirit, that he was still desirous to end this Controversy by Reason, and not by the Sword.

Ver. 15. And saith unto him, Thus saith *Jephthab*.] This is his Reply; which seems to be delivered as from a Man in Authority.

Israel took not away the Land of *Moab*, nor the Land of the Children of *Ammon*.] He denies the Matter of Fact, upon which they grounded the War: For the *Israelites* found this Country in the Possession of *Sibon*.

Ver. 16. But when *Israel* came out of *Egypt*.] He proves the Truth of what he affirmed, by a short History of what passed after they came out of *Egypt*; when the King of *Ammon* said, *Ver.* 13. they took this Land from him.

And walked through the Wilderness, unto the Red Sea, and came to *Kadesh*.] This is not to be understood of *Kadesh-barnea*, but of that *Kadesh* mentioned *Numb.* xx. 1, 14. which was in the Borders of *Edom*; unto which they came

directly from the Red Sea: Nor of their coming to the Red Sea, in the first Year after they passed through it, mentioned *Numb.* xxxiii. 10. but of their last coming to it, in that Station they made at *Ezion-geber*, (after many Stations in other Places) which was upon the Shore of the Red Sea; from whence they immediately marched to this *Kadesh*, *Numb.* xxxiii. 35, 36.

Ver. 17. Then *Israel* sent Messengers to the King of *Edom*, saying, Let me, I pray thee, pass through thy Land.] This shews, they were so far from invading any Body's Country, that they humbly begged Leave to pass through *Edom*, engaging to do no Violence, but to pay for every Thing they wanted. See *Numb.* xx. 14, &c.

But the King of *Edom* would not hearken thereto.] Notwithstanding which, they were not provoked by their Inhumanity to quarrel with them.

And in like manner they sent to the King of *Moab*, but he would not consent.] We do not read of such a Message sent to the *Moabites*: But when they came from *Ezion-geber* into the Wilderness of *Moab*, we find a Command of God to them not to distress the *Moabites*, nor to contend with them in Battle: Which intimates there was some Occasion for it; which was their Refusal to grant them a common Civility.

And *Israel* abode in *Kadesh*.] Put up all these Affronts, and abstained from all Violence, continuing quiet in the Place where they had pitched their Tents.

Ver. 18. Then they went along through the Wilderness, and encompassed the Land of *Edom*, and the Land of *Moab*.] When they were denied a Passage the direct Way, they chose rather to fetch a great Compass, and travel many Miles with great Labour and Toil, (see *Numb.* xxi. 4.) than give others the least Disturbance.

And came by the East Side of the Land of *Moab*, and pitched upon the other Side of *Arnon*.] See *Numb.* xxi. 13.

But came not within the Border of *Moab*; for *Arnon* was the Border of *Moab*.] This is a Demonstration that they did no Injury to the *Moabites*, into whose Country they did not enter. For they went no further than *Arnon*, which divided their Country from the *Ammonites*.

Ver. 19. And *Israel* sent Messengers unto *Sibon* King of the *Amorites*, the King of *Heshbon*.] Where his Royal Palace was. See *Numb.* xxi. 25, 26.

And *Israel* said unto him, Let us pass, we pray thee, through thy Land, unto my Place.] Being denied Passage through *Edom* and *Moab*, they sent a friendly Message unto him, craving the Favour of being permitted to go through his Country unto *Canaan*, *Numb.* xxi. 21, 22.

Ver. 20. But *Sibon* trusted not *Israel* to pass through his Coast.] Was jealous they would seize on his Country.

But *Sibon* gathered all his People together, and pitched in *Jabaz*, and fought against *Israel*.] He contented not himself to refuse (as his Neighbours had done) to grant a Passage through his Country,

Country, which they could not demand, but raised all his Forces, and proudly marched to drive them away from his Borders, *Numb. xxi. 23, 24.*

Ver. 21. *And the LORD GOD of Israel delivered Sihon, and all his People, into the Hand of Israel, and they smote them.]* It was plainly an Act of God to give the *Israelites* the Victory; for they were unprepared for War, and tired with a long March about the Land of *Edom* and *Moab*.

So *Israel* possessed all the Land of the *Amorites*, the Inhabitants of that Country.] They did not dispossess the *Moabites*, but the *Amorites*, who then inhabited that Country, which became the Possession of the *Israelites*, by the Right of a just War, in their own Defence.

Ver. 22. *And they possessed all the Coasts of the Ammorites, from Arnon even unto Jabbok, and from the Wilderiness even unto Jordan.]* This is a Description of the Length and Breadth of the Land, from South to North, and from East to West: (See above, *Ver. 13.*) None of which was then in the Possession of the *Moabites* or *Ammonites*; who could not therefore charge the *Israelites* with taking any of their Land from them.

Ver. 23. *And so now the LORD GOD of Israel hath dispossessed the Amorites from before his People Israel.]* This is a new Title to this Land; which they not only took in a just War, but was also given them by God, who made them victorious, and then bestowed it upon them.

And shouldst thou possess it?] It was absurd to think, that they should take the Pains to conquer it, and God should give it to them, that they might put the Moabites again in the Possession of it, with whom they had no Alliance; but, quite contrary, they had denied them the common Right of Mankind.

Ver. 24. *Wilt not thou possess that which Chemos thy God giveth thee to possess?] He doth not call Chemos a God; but only argues from the Opinion that they had of him, which all Nations had of their Gods, that they owed their Conquests to them, to whom therefore they gave Thanks for all their Victories. Now he appeals to them, whether they would not keep what their God had given them, and look upon it as rightfully possessed by them.*

So whomsoever the LORD our God shall drive out from before us, them will we possess.] By the very same Title, whereby the *Moabites* possessed the Country wherein they now lived; from whence they drove out the ancient Inhabitants, *Deut. ii. 10, 11.*

Ver. 25. *And now art thou any thing better than Balak, the Son of Zippor, King of Moab?] This is a third Argument, that when this Conquest was newly made by the Israelites, the then King of Moab (as potent as the present) laid no Claim to this Country, nor demanded to have it restored to him; but only was afraid they should invade the Land he still possessed.*

Did he ever strive against Israel.] Dispute their Title with them.

Or did he ever fight against Israel.] Endeavour by Force of Arms to recover this Country, as not belonging to them, but to him.

as not belonging to them, but to him.

Ver. 26. *While Israel dwelt in Heshbon, and her Towns, and in Aroer, and her Towns, and in all the Cities that be along by the Coast of Arnon three hundred Years? &c.]* In the last place he pleads Prescription, and that for three hundred Years; in which long Space of Time none of the Kings of *Moab* pretended a Right to this Country, much less contended it with them; which Argument was irrefragable. For if such a long undisputed Possession cannot make a Right to a Country, it is impossible there should be any End of Wars between Kings and Princes. But all Mankind look upon those Wars as unjust, which are made for Recovery of Countries wherein People have settled quietly for many Ages; tho', perhaps, in the first Acquisition of them, their Title was not good. Therefore it is not necessary to examine, whether *Sihon* had a just Cause of War when he conquered this Country; nor is it of Importance, with respect to this, to examine whether the *Israelites* had held this Conquest just three hundred Years; for if a few be wanting, it is not material: But with respect to something else it is of great Consequence, for the explaining of what we read *1 Kings vi. 2.* that *Solomon* began to build the Temple in the four hundred and eightieth Year after they came out of *Egypt*. Which Space is divided by these Words of *Jephthab* into two Intervals: The first of which contained three hundred and forty Years; for they had possessed this Country three hundred Years, and they came out of *Egypt* forty Years before its Conquest: During which Time, they had been Slaves to the *Mesopotamians*, *Moabites*, *Canaanites*, and *Midianites*. Now, if the Years wherein they were oppressed by these four Nations, and the Years of Peace and Quiet which they enjoyed, be put together, from the first Year of *Cushan-Rishothaim*, to the last Year of *Jair*, they produce a little more than three hundred Years; so that no Time is left for *Joshua's* Conquest of *Canaan*, and his Life after it, and for the Generation that out-lived him. But by supposing that some of these Things fell out in the very same Time, (as for Example, during the four-score Years Rest in the Eastern Parts of the Land after *Eglon's* Death, they were oppressed twenty Years in the North by *Jabin*) this Difficulty is removed, and all comes right; as Sir *John Marsham* hath demonstrated in his *Canon Chronicus*: Where he shews, that from the Death of *Moses* to this Invasion of the *Ammonites*, there were three hundred Years; allowing five and twenty Years (as *Josephus* computes) for *Joshua's* Government after they came into *Canaan*, and thirty-five Years to the following Generation that survived him. See *Seculum 11. Æra Exodi*. And concerning the other Interval, see here *xii. 14.*

Why therefore did ye not recover them within that Time?] This Question could not be answered, that in so long a Time they should hear nothing of their Claim till now.

Ver. 27. *Wherefore I have not sinned against thee, but thou dost me wrong to war against me.] Upon all these Reasons he concludes, the Ammonites*

monites had no Cause to make this War; but were injurious in it to the *Israelites*.

The LORD, the Judge, be Judge this Day between the Children of Israel, and the Children of Ammon.] The Meaning is, that if they were not moved by these Reasons, but the Controversy must be decided by Arms, he committed his Cause to God, the righteous Judge of the whole World, who, he doubted not, would do him right. By *this Day* he doth not mean that God would determine the Right, by giving him the Victory then, when he spake these Words, (for he was not yet ready to give them Battle) but that God would judge of the Justice of his present Plea, and accordingly give Sentence, when the Matter came to be tried in a Battle.

Ver. 28. *Howbeit the King of the Children of Ammon hearkened not to the Words of Jephthah, which he sent him.*] He would not yield to Arguments, being obstinately resolved to fight it out.

Ver. 29. *Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah.*] The People had chosen him for their Leader, and promised to continue him their chief Governor, as they had already made him; and now God publicly declares his Approbation of their Choice; and made him their Judge, as he had done others before, (iii. 10.) by endowing him with an extraordinary Measure of Courage and Wisdom, and all other Qualities necessary to render him fit to be the Ruler of his People.

And he passed over Gilead and Manasseh.] Went through the whole Country of *Reuben* and *Gad*, (which are comprehended in *Gilead*) and likewise the half Tribe of *Manasseh*, and levied what Men he could among them.

And passed over Mizpeh of Gilead.] Went to the extreme Part of the Country Northward, where *Mizpeh* was, towards Mount *Lebanon* and *Hermon*.

And from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over unto the Children of Ammon.] He marched from thence, with such Forces as he had gathered, toward the Enemies Country.

Ver. 30. *And Jephthah vowed a Vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the Children of Ammon into my Hand.*] He did not make a Doubt of it, but thought he might be more assured of Victory, if he made a religious Vow before-hand, of being very grateful to God for it. Which was the Custom of the ancient *Romans*, as we find in *Livy*; who frequently tells us, that their Generals were wont to vow to *Jupiter*, or *Apollo*, or others, Part of the Spoil they should take in War; or to build Temples in their Honour. And thus the *Israelites*, when King *Arad* came against them, as they were going towards *Canaan*, (a little before the Conquest of this Country now in Controversy) vowed to make his Country a *Cherem*, if God would deliver it into their Hands. See *Numb.* xxi. 2.

Ver. 31. *That it shall be, that whatsoever.*] This comprehends all Sorts of Creatures, as the *Hebrew* Doctors commonly observe.

Cometh forth of the Doors of my House to meet me.] The *Vulgar* adds the Word *first*, which must be understood; otherwise, he would have

been obliged to devote many Things to the LORD, which might possibly come out of his House.

When I return in Peace from the Children of Ammon.] Come back victorious.

Shall surely be the LORD's, and I will offer it up for a Burnt-offering.] If it was a Thing fit to be offered; for if a Dog or a Swine should have happened to come out first to meet him, that was not lawful to be offered. But the great Question is, Whether it was not as unlawful to offer his Daughter, who seems to be comprehended in this Vow? And it is said afterwards, *Ver.* 39. that he did unto her according to it. *Josephus*, and the *Chaldee* Paraphrast, and several famous *Rabbins*, think that he did offer her, being deceived by a Mistake of the Sense of that Law, *Levit.* xxvii. 28. And tho' he might have been absolved from his Vow by the High Priest, yet they tell an idle Story, that they stood so much upon a Punctilio of their Dignity, that he would neither go to *Phineas*, nor *Phineas* vouchsafe to wait upon him. Which is a Tale not to be found in the *Talmud*, but in some lesser Writer, as *Mr. Selden* observes, *Lib.* 4. *de Jure Nat. & Gent.* Cap. 11. where he shews, that the two *Kimchi's*, Father and Son, with *R. Levi ben Gersom*, and others, interpret these Words quite otherwise; and take the Particle (which we translate *and*) to be a *disjunctive*; that is, as much as *or*. So *Kimchi* his Words are, *It shall be consecrated to the LORD, if it be not fit for a Burnt-offering; or it shall be offered for a Burnt-offering, if it be fit for it.* And so they think she was devoted to God, and separate from all Secular Affairs, that she might give herself continually to Prayer and holy Exercises. Which Opinion hath several Difficulties in it, as he there observes; and it must be confessed, the Stream of Interpreters runs the quite contrary Way: For tho' they call this *votum temerarium*, as *Tertullian* doth, a rash Vow, or a foolish incautious Vow, as *Theodoret*, *St. Austin*, and others; yet very great Numbers (and indeed most of the antient Christian Writers) think that he did really offer her: Tho' it cannot be denied, that there are great Difficulties in this Interpretation also; no such thing having ever been done in *Israel*; but such Sacrifices declared abominable unto God: Which it is a Wonder he should not know, nor the People neither; who, one would have expected, should have hindered such a barbarous Sacrifice. All that can be said in Answer to this, is, that they having been long accustomed to Idolatrous Worship, and he having lived out of his own Country, and being a Soldier, had forgotten their Law, or retained but a very imperfect Knowledge of it. But they that would see this Matter largely discussed, may consult *Ludovicus Capellus*, who hath a long Dissertation on purpose about it; and I shall say something more of it upon the latter End of this Chapter.

Ver. 32. *So Jephthah passed over unto the Children of Ammon, to fight against them.*] He was not far from them before, *Ver.* 29. but now he drew his Army up to them, and engaged them.

And

And the LORD delivered them into his Hand.] And thereby declared the Ammonites were in the wrong; *Ver. 27.*

Ver. 33. And he smote them from Arzer.] Which was a City upon the Banks of the River Arnon; or rather in the River, being encompassed with it.

Till thou come to Minnith.] Another City up in the Country.

Even twenty Cities, and unto the Plain of the Vineyards.] They chased them a great Way, and destroyed their Cities as they went along; till they came to the Plain here mentioned. Or, as it is in the Margin, unto *Abel*; a City perhaps which was very strong, called *Abel-Keramim*, as the LXX understand it.

With a great Slaughter.] Both in the Field, and in the Cities.

Thus the Children of Ammon were subdued before the Children of Israel.] So that they infested their Country no more.

Ver. 34. And Jephthah came to Mizpeh, unto his House.] From which he went forth when he began this Expedition, *Ver. 29.*

And behold, his Daughter came out to meet him, with Timbrels and Dances.] She was the first Person of his Family whom he saw at his Return, who came, accompanied with some of her Neighbours, to welcome him home, and congratulate his Victory with Musick and Dancing. So the old Manner had been, *Exod. xv. 20.* and continued afterwards, *1 Sam. xviii. 6.*

And she was his only Child; beside her he had neither Son nor Daughter.] In the Hebrew the Words are, he had not from himself either Son or Daughter; intimating, perhaps, that tho' his Wife had Children by another Husband, or he had adopted Children; yet he had none descended from his own Body but this only Daughter, which made her the dearer to him.

Ver. 35. And it came to pass, that when he saw her, he rent his Clothes.] As the Manner was when any great Calamity befel them. See *Levit. x. 6.*

And said, Alas! my Daughter, thou hast brought me very low.] Quite spoiled my Triumph.

And thou art one of them that trouble me.] Which was the more afflictive, because he expected from her the greatest Comfort and Pleasure.

For I have opened my Mouth unto the LORD, and I cannot go back.] That is, made a Vow, which he could not retract. It is likely he told her what it was, tho' that be not here expressed; or by his deep Sorrow at the first Sight of her, she understood it was upon her Account: But in this he was grossly mistaken, which way soever we interpret this Vow; whether of separating her from Company, or of offering her for a Burnt-offering; for he was bound to neither, yea, he was bound not to offer her in Sacrifice, which was a Thing abominable. As for the other, there was no such Power by their Law granted to Parents, to shut up their Children, and separate them from all Society with Men, as Mr. Selden observes, there being not the least Footstep of any such Thing

in the whole Body of their *Talmud*; or in their Lawyers.

Ver. 36. And she said unto him, My Father, if thou hast opened thy Mouth unto the LORD, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy Mouth; forasmuch as the LORD hath taken Vengeance for thee of thine Enemies, even of the Children of Ammon.] A rare Instance of Religion; Courage, Obedience to her Parents, and Love to her Country.

Ver. 37. And she said unto her Father, Let this Thing be done for me.] Grant me only one Request; which was not inconsistent; she thought, with his Vow; for he did not say he would execute it immediately.

Let me alone two Months.] Leave me at Liberty so long.

That I may go up and down upon the Mountains.] Which were fit Places for her Purpose, being solitary, and far from Company.

To bewail my Virginity.] For it was accounted a great Infelicity in that Nation to die without Issue.

I and my Fellows.] Other Virgins, her Companions. This some take for an Argument, that she was not to be sacrificed; for then she would have bewailed her Death, rather than her Want of Posterity. But this is no concluding Argument; for she might possibly look upon it as an Honour to be a Sacrifice unto God.

Ver. 38. And he said, Go; and he sent her away for two Months, and she went with her Companions, and bewailed her Virginity upon the Mountains.] They that think she knew she was to be offered, infer from hence, that she looked upon it as a greater Calamity to die without Issue, than merely to die.

Ver. 39. And it came to pass, at the End of two Months she returned to her Father.] Having had time to bring her Mind unto a perfect Resignation to her Father; or rather, to confirm herself in the Resolution she had at first, cheerfully to submit unto whatsoever he had vowed.

Who did with her according to his Vow, which he had vowed.] That is, saith Kimchi, he made her an House, and brought her into it, and there left her secluded from the Company of all Men, and from all secular Affairs. That's the Meaning, he thinks, of the first Part of his Vow; *It shall surely be the LORD's.* And so Ralbag, a little more fully, she was separated from the Company of Men; for if she had had a Husband, she could not have served the LORD alone, but must have served her Husband also, as all Wives are bound to do. Selden indeed saith, that he doth not see what Law gave him this Power to keep her from Marriage; there being nothing of it in all their Books, as was said before. But there is something like it in *2 Sam. xx. 3.* where David shut up his Concubines, and made them live in Widowhood till their Death. And he might take the Liberty to do this, (though no Law gave him such Power) rather than take away the Life of his Daughter, which was against Law; for it condemned such Sacrifices. But the Truth is, there was no Necessity of doing either, if he had understood,

or considered the Law; for he might have paid a Price for her to the Priest, which the Law prescribed, when a Son or Daughter was consecrated to God, *Levit. xxvii. 2, 3, &c.* Nay, they who consecrated themselves, might redeem themselves: And about this very Case of *Jephthab* there was anciently a Dispute between two famous Doctors, *Simeon ben Lakish*, and *R. Jobanan*; the former of which maintained, that he ought to have paid the Price or Value of her, according to the Law; but the other maintained, he was not bound to do so much as that, because the Vow was to offer a Burnt-offering, in which his Daughter could not be comprehended. For other Animals only were capable of being offered in Sacrifice. As for those Words, *Levit. xxvii. 28, 29.* upon which *Lud. Capellus* hath founded his Opinion that she might be sacrificed, *Maimonides* hath better restrained them to the Sons and Daughters of the *Canaanites*, devoted by God to Destruction. But who can think that God would have the *Hebrew* Children so devoted as those Slaves were, upon whom a Curse was denounced before they entered into *Canaan*? Beside, if *Jephthab* was bound to offer his Daughter, who should be employed in that Work? Should the Priests? But their Business was rather to persuade and deter him from what he had imprudently vowed. Should the Magistrates? But they could not be ignorant that God had forbidden such Sacrifices. Should *Jephthab* himself? But this would have argued him as void of common Sense, as of natural Affection. And who can think (as *Theodoricus Hackspan* goes on) that since God allowed Cities of Refuge, whither a Man-slayer might flee, and be safe, when he had unwittingly killed a Man, that the same Privilege might not have been allowed to a Son or a Daughter, who was perfectly innocent, (as this Virgin was) viz. to save their Lives by Flight, or by paying a Ransom?

The *Jews* are very doubtful in this Matter; for some say *Phineas* lost his Priesthood, and it was translated to the Family of *Itamar*, because he did not absolve *Jephthab* from this Vow: But others of the Eastern Writers say, he was forbid to release him by the Spirit of Prophecy. And *Jephthab*, when he was admonished by his Friends to go and advise with him how to save his Daughter, was forbid by an Angel to go. See *Selden, Lib. 1. de Succession. ad Pontificatum, Cap. 2. Fol. 117, &c.* But the *Targum* upon this Verse blames *Jephthab* for not consulting *Phineas*; for if he had he would have redeemed her for a Sum of Money.

And she knew no Man.] This is looked upon, by those who think she was only consecrated to the Lord, as an Argument of it; that after the Performance of his Vow, it is said, *She knew no Man*; that is, as long as she lived, she continued a Virgin.

And it was a Custom in Israel.] They that think she was sacrificed; take these Words as separate from those that follow, and interpret them, Upon this a Sanction was made, that none should hereafter, by the like Error offer

human Sacrifices. So the *Targum*. See *Selden* in the Place forenamed. But there was no need of this Statute; nor is it likely that the Fable among the *Greeks*, concerning the Sacrifice of *Iphigenia* by *Agamemnon*, was devised out of this sacred Story, as *Lud. Capellus* conjectures; who fancies also this *Jephthigia*, that is, the Daughter of *Jephthab*, (from whence might come *Iphigenia*) was not sacrificed upon the Altar, but only slain; though the Vow was, he would offer a Burnt-offering. But we refer these Words to what follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 40. *That the Daughters of Israel.*] They of that Country.

Went yearly to lament the Daughter of Jephthab the Gileadite.] Some interpret the *Hebrew* Word *Thannoth* to signify they went to discourse with her, or to comfort her; though the most ancient Interpreters (as *Bochartus* observes in his *Hieroicoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 1. Cap. 9.) translate it as we do *ἑνεῖν*, as the *LXX* have it, to make Lamentation. But quite contrary the learned *Lud. de Dieu*, different from the rest, (except *Sixtinus Amama*, who hath the same Notion) interprets it to praise her. Which Signification he plainly derives out of the *Arabick* Language; and beside, we ourselves in this very Book (Ver. 11.) seem to follow it, by translating it *rehearse*. And thus that excellent Man explains this whole Matter. *She was not slain; but as appears sufficiently from the foregoing Words, was devoted to perpetual Virginity; in which she deserved greater Commendation than her Father. For he, as soon as he saw her come to meet him, repented of the Vow he had rashly made, and tore his Clothes, lamenting the miserable Condition into which he had brought himself and her: But she most courageously comforted her Father, and congratulating his Victory, desired him not to be troubled about her, for she was ready to submit to what he had vowed. Upon the Account of which heroick Virtue, whereby she obliged the whole Country, they could do no less than celebrate her Praise every Year.*

Four Days in the Year.] One Day in every Quarter of the Year, they went to celebrate her Fame with Verses composed in her Praise, as *Grotius* supposes. But whether they went to the Place where she was retired, and there sang them before her, or in some other publick Place; and whether while she lived, or after her Death, is uncertain, as *de Dieu* observes.

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Men of Ephraim gathered themselves.*] In the *Hebrew*, were called, by a publick Cry, or Proclamation, to arm themselves.

And went Northward.] To the Country of *Manasseh*, on the other Side *Jordan*. For this sufficiently shews, that *Mizpeh* was in that Country, and in the Northern Part of it, towards *Lebanon* and *Hermon*, as I observed before, xi. 29. *Pet. Martyr* thinks they did not march orderly thither, being not gathered together (as far as appears) by the Authority of the

the Magistrate, but in a tumultuous Manner, as seditious People are wont to do.

And said unto Jephthab.] By this, and by what follows, it appears they came to Mizpeh, where Jephthab dwelt.

Wherefore passedst thou over.] They do not mean over Jordan, for there he was already; but from hence to the Coast of the Ammonites. See xi. 30, 32.

To fight against the Children of Ammon, and didst not call us to go with thee?] Their Pride made them take it ill, that they had not a Share in the Glory of the late Victory. Just as formerly they quarrelled with Gideon upon the like Occasion, viii. 1. which shews they were an haughty Tribe.

We will burn thine House upon thee with Fire.] Their Pride put them into such a strange Rage, that they seem to threaten to burn him, as well as his House.

Ver. 2. *And Jephthab said unto them, I and my People were at great Strife with the Children of Ammon.*] He answers their furious Language with great Mildness; and first tells them, that he did not undertake this War till he was forced to it by the Ammonites, who sorely distressed them, x. 9.

And when I called you, ye delivered me not out of their Hands.] In the second place he denies their Charge, and affirms the contrary, that he had begged their Assistance, but they refused to give it him: Yea (as the Word we translate called signifies) he had cried aloud to them, with earnest Importunities, to help them in their Distress.

Ver. 3. *And when I saw that you delivered me not.*] That there was no Hope of your Help to preserve us from Ruin.

I put my Life in my Hand.] Exposed myself to the utmost Hazard; for he had but a small Part of the People of Israel with him, to fight with their powerful Oppressors. This Phrase seems peculiar to the Hebrews, and the Eastern Writers; for among all the Greek and Roman Writers, Isaac Casaubon saith he never met with it but once in Xenarchus; whom Athenæus alleges, introducing in one of his Plays a Man full of Fear and Trembling — ἐν τῇ χειρὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐχούσα.

And passed over against the Children of Ammon.] With such Forces alone as he could get on his Side Jordan, xi. 29, 30.

And the Lord delivered them into my Hand.] God approved his Undertaking, by giving him a great Victory.

Wherefore then are ye come up unto me this Day to fight against me?] Who had defended and preserved them. For if the Ammonites had vanquished Jephthab, they would soon have passed over Jordan, and fallen upon the Ephraimites; as they had before attempted, x. 9.

Ver. 4. *Then Jephthab gathered all the Men of Gilead, and fought with Ephraim.*] When he saw they were not pacified by this fair and peaceable Apology, but still continued their Menaces, he betook himself to Arms, and raised as many Men as he could to oppose them.

And the Men of Gilead smote them.] Put them to flight, and made a great Slaughter of them.

Because they said, Ye Gileadites are Fugitives of Ephraim.] That which provoked them to kill so many of them, was their scoffing Language (added to their Threats) whereby they reproached the Men of Gilead (who were the chief Managers of the late War, xi. 29.) as if they were but the Scum and Dregs of the Tribe of Ephraim, i. e. of those descended from Joseph, among whom they were the principal.

Among the Ephraimites, and among the Manassites.] That is, that dwelt in the Land of Canaan: Who looked upon the Gileadites, and the rest of the Manassites, on the other Side Jordan, and in the most Northerly Part of it, as the Refuse of their Nation. But it must be acknowledged that the Words in the Hebrew are capable of another Sense, and may be thus translated: *Therefore* (so the Particle Ki is often translated) *they said, Fugitives of Ephraim are ye*; That is, having smote them, the Gileadites called the Ephraimites Run-aways. And the Truth is, thus they (not the Gileadites) are called in the next Verse: And then the following Words may be thus translated, *Gilead got between the Ephraimites and the Manassites.* It is very probable that the Manassites in Canaan joined with the Ephraimites, in this presumptuous Attempt upon the Gileadites; who being well acquainted with their own Country, got between them and the River Jordan, to intercept their Passage over it, as we read in the following Verse.

Ver. 5. *And the Gileadites took the Passages of Jordan before the Ephraimites.*] So that none could pass over at these Fords, without their Leave.

And it was so, that when the Ephraimites were escaped.] They are the very same Words in the Hebrew, which are used in the foregoing Verse, *The Fugitives of Ephraim.*

Said, Let me go over; that the Men of Gilead.] Who were set to guard the Passages.

Said, Art thou an Ephraimite?] They examined him what Countryman he was; whether a Reubenite, Gadite, Manassite, on their Side Jordan, or one of the Ephraimites on the other.

If he said, Nay.] For Fear would make him deny it.

Ver. 6. *Then said they unto him, say now Shibboleth.*] To find the Truth, they put him to this Test; whether his Pronunciation of some Words was like that of the Gileadites: For People of the same Nation, who speak the same Language, differ very much in their Pronunciation of it, in several Parts of the Country: As in Greece, all spake Greek; but the Ionians, Atticks, Dorians, and Æolians spake it very differently. And so they did among the Romans; for at Præneste, which was not far from Rome, (as Pet. Martyr observes out of Plautus) instead of Ciconia, they said Konia. And so the Ephraimites said Sibboleth, but could not pronounce Shibboleth. There were many other Words like this, which they could not

not frame their Mouths to speak, as the *Gileadites* did; but this was chosen, it is likely, because it was very fit for the Purpose; *Sibboleth* signifying not only an *Ear of Corn*, but also *Floods of Water*, (*Psal.* lxxix. 2.) so that the Test they put them unto was this, to bid them say, *Let me pass over the Water.*

And he said Sibboleth; for he could not frame his Mouth to pronounce it right.] If he was an *Ephraimite*, he presently discovered himself; for he could not pronounce the Letter *Shin*; which proceeded, I suppose, from the long Use and Custom of that People to pronounce otherwise, so that they could not frame the Organs of Speech to pronounce as the *Gileadites* did: Which we see at this Day among all Nations; who in different Provinces, very much differ in their Speech, tho' they use the very same Language.

Then they took him, and slew him in the Passages of Jordan.] Otherwise they let him go; for they used this Mark of Distinction on purpose, lest they should kill any of another Tribe.

And there fell at that Time of the Ephraimites, Forty and Two Thousand.] In the Fight, and at the Passages of *Jordan*, this Number perished: Which was a just Punishment to take down their Pride and Insolence, in despising so great a Man as *Jephthah*, and threatening to destroy his House, after so glorious a Victory, whereby he had saved all the People of *Israel*; and reproaching their Brethren also, whom they invaded without any Cause, and seem to have intended to drive them out of their Country.

Ver. 7. And Jephthah judged Israel six Years.] After this Humiliation of the *Ephraimites*, all the Tribes, whom the *Ammonites* had oppressed, (on the other Side *Jordan*, perhaps, in the Land of *Canaan*, as well as the *Gileadites*, and the rest on their Side) submitted themselves unto him, as their Judge; and he continued six Years in the Government.

Then died Jephthah the Gileadite, and was buried in one of the Cities of Gilead.] The *Jews* have several foolish Conceits concerning his Death and Burial; because it is said, *He was buried in the Cities of Gilead*, as the Words are in the *Hebrew*: Which they would have understood, as if he rotted (as a Punishment for offering his Daughter) and one Piece of him, when it dropt off, was buried in one City, and another in the next City, &c. when the plain Meaning is expressed in our Translation, That he was buried in one of the Cities, that is, in *Mizpeh* where he lived. See *Gen.* xix. 29. And so *Aben-Ezra* and *Rabag* interpret it: Tho' the latter of these *Rabbins* could not forbear to incline to one of their *Talmudical* Fables; that he having no Issue to propagate his Name, ordered his Body to be cut into several Pieces, and buried in so many Cities of *Gilead*; that every one might preserve his Memory. Other fancies there are, in which Men indulge themselves, and *Peter Martyr* hath thought fit to interpose his Conjecture, that the Word *Iram*, which we translate *Cities*,

may possibly be a proper Name of a City in *Gilead*, wherein he was buried.

Ver. 8. And after him Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel.] It is not said upon what Occasion he was made Judge; for, perhaps, he was raised up by God immediately after *Jephthah's* Death, only to preserve them in the true Religion, which was in some measure restored. Some of the *Jews* fancy him to have been the same with *Boaz*, who married *Ruth* the *Moubitess*; but without any Ground at all that I can find.

Ver. 9. And he had Thirty Sons and Thirty Daughters.] A numerous Issue was accounted a great Blessing in those Days: And tho' we read of no memorable Act that this Judge did, yet this is set down to shew, that he was a Person eminently favoured by God.

Whom he sent abroad.] The *Vulgar* refers this to his Daughters, for whom he provided Husbands, and sent his Daughters to their Houses, as the Manner was, *Gen.* xxiv. 67. xxxi. 50.

And he took in Thirty Daughters from abroad for his Sons.] This completed the Blessing of God in the Gift of so many Children; who all lived to the State of Men and Women, and were all disposed by him in Marriage; for that was in the Power of Parents. See *Gen.* xxiv.

And he judged Israel Seven Years.] Not all the *Israelites*, but those that *Jephthah* had judged; and none disputed his Authority, but he ruled over them thus long.

Ver. 10. Then died Ibzan, and was buried at Bethlehem.] There were two *Bethlehems*, one in the Tribe of *Zebulun*, and the other in the Tribe of *Judah*; the latter of which, it is generally thought, is here meant, where he was born and buried.

Ver. 11. And after him Elon a Zebulonite judged Israel, and he judged Israel Ten Years.] It is observed by many, that *Eusebius*, in his *Chronicon*, passes by this Judge, because he saith the *LXX* do not mention him; tho' the *Hebrew* Text doth: But as all our present Copies of the *LXX* now mention him; so did those whom a very antient Writer used, viz. *Theophilus Antioch.* Lib. i. *ad Autolicum*; and which is more to be wondered at, those Copies also which *Eusebius* himself followed in his *Tenth Book, de Præpar. Evang.* Cap. xiv. as our Primate *Usher* hath observed in his *Chronologia Sacra*, Pars I. Cap. ult.

Ver. 12. And Elon the Zebulonite died, and was buried in Aijalon in the Country of Zebulun] These last Words were added to distinguish this *Aijalon* here mentioned, from another in the Tribe of *Dan.* i. 35.

Ver. 13. And after him Abdon the Son of Hillel, a Pirathonite, judged Israel.] The Place where he was born, shews that he was of the Tribe of *Ephraim*; whom God at last honoured with a Judge of their own Country, after their Pride had been humbled by *Jephthah*: For *Pirathon* is expressly said, *Ver. 15.* to be in the Land of *Ephraim*.

Ver. 14. And he had Forty Sons, and Thirty Nephews.] That is, Grandsons.

That

That rode on Threescore and Ten Asses Colts.] See *Ver. 10.* This is said, to shew that God blessed him not only with a numerous Posterity, but let them all grow up to be Men. See *x. 4.*

And he judged Israel Eight Years.] The Intention of this Book is chiefly to shew how God punished them for their Sins, and delivered them upon their Repentance: But nothing remarkable of this Kind falling out in the Time of these Three last mentioned Judges, he omits to relate their other Acts, which was beside his Purpose.

Here it may be fit to note, that the other Interval of the two mentioned upon *xi. 26.* consisting of an Hundred and Forty Years, (which added to Three Hundred and Forty, in the foregoing Interval, make up the 480 Years mentioned *1 Kings vi. 2.*) it is evident that the latter Part of them, viz. *Eighty Four Years*, were made up by the Reigns of *Saul* and *David*, who each reigned Forty Years, (*2 Sam. v. 4. Acts xiii. 21.*) and the four first Years of *Solomon*: Therefore the remaining *Fifty six Years* are made up of Part of the *Eighteen Years* wherein the *Ammonites* oppressed *Israel* after the Death of *Jair*, and the Years wherein these four last named Persons and *Samuel* judged *Israel*.

Ver. 15. And Abdon the Son of Hillel the Pirathonite died, and was buried in Pirathon in the Land of Ephraim, in the Mount of the Amalekites.] Some think this Mount retained the Name of *Mount Amalek* (as the Words are in the *Hebrew*) from ancient Times; the *Amalekites* having possessed it heretofore, when the *Canaanites* were the Inhabitants of this Country: But it may as well be thought (since all that is said, is but Conjecture) that it was so called from some famous Overthrow, which the Children of *Ephraim* gave the *Amalekites* in this Place: For in the Time of the Judges they more than once joined with others against the *Israelites*. See *iii. 13. vi. 3.* but especially see what I have noted upon *v. 14.*

C H A P. XIII.

Ver. 1. AND the Children of Israel did Evil again in the Sight of the LORD.] As he complained before, *x. 6.* when he began to speak of what befel them thereupon.

And the LORD delivered them into the Hand of the Philistines Forty Years.] This is the sixth Oppression, and the longest that they ever lay under: Which is thought, by a great Man I have often mentioned, to have ended seven Months after the Death of *Eli*, when the Ark was brought back out of the Land of the *Philistines*; and, by the same Reason, it began so many Months after he entered upon the Government, after the Death of *Abdon*. See *Usserii Annales, ad A. D. 2848.* and his *Chronologica Sacra*, Pag. 1. Cap. 12, 13. But, I think, Sir *John Marsham* hath since that more rightly judged, That this Oppression by the *Philistines* is not different from that mentioned *x. 7, 8.* but one and the same; they vexing

and oppressing the *Israelites* in the West, when the *Ammonites* oppressed them in the East: For tho' the Oppression of the *Philistines* lasted longer, yet it began at the very same Time with the other; which made their Distress the greater: And therefore that Preface (*x. 7.*) belongs not only to what immediately there follows, concerning the *Ammonites* and *Jephthah*; but to what is here related concerning the *Philistines* and *Sampson*: Which the holy Writer could not speak of both together without Confusion; and therefore first relates the Issue of the War with the *Ammonites*, and then relates the other Part of the History concerning the *Philistines*, which he here begins: And by this *Synchronism* all Difficulties may be solved, and the Years, which seemed redundant, brought within their true Compass. See his *Canon Chronicus*, Sect. 11. Pag. 293.

Ver. 2. And there was a certain Man of Zorah.] See *Josh. xix. 40, 41.*

Of the Family of the Danites.] Sometimes the Word *Family* is used for a *Tribe*. See *Josh. vii. 17.* Or, the Meaning may be of a *Family among the Danites*: From among whom it was very proper to have a Deliverer raised up to them, for the *Danites* were near Neighbours to the *Philistines*, who oppressed them.

Whose name was Manoah, and his Wife was barren and bare not.] Was not likely to have any Children.

Ver. 3. And the Angel of the LORD appeared unto the Woman.] As he did to *Gideon*, *vi. 12.* in Human Shape; as the Relation shews in the following Verses, *5, 8, &c.*

And said unto her, Behold now thou art barren and beareth not; but thou shalt conceive and bear a Son.] The greatest Men of this Nation were born of barren Women; as *Isaac* was anciently, and *Samuel* and *John the Baptist* in future Times.

Ver. 4. Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not Wine nor strong Drink.] She was to live as the *Nazarites* did, (*Numb. vi. 2, 3.*) while she carried him in her Womb, and perhaps while she nursed him; because, as it follows in the next Verse, he was to be a perpetual *Nazarite* unto God, from his Conception to his Death (*Ver. 7.*) which he could not have been, if she had drank Wine or strong Drink; because a Child in the Womb and its Mother live by the same Nourishment.

And eat not any unclean Thing.] It is likely they were too negligent in those Days, in observing the Precepts about Meats; otherwise there would have been no need to mention this.

Ver. 5. For lo, thou shalt conceive and bear a Son, and no Razor shall come on his Head; for the Child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the Womb.] See upon *Numb. vi. 4.*

And he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the Hands of the Philistines.] He did not perfectly deliver the *Israelites* from the Yoke of the *Philistines*, but it was done after his Death by *Samuel*; who put an End to this Forty Years Tyranny, by this famous Victory at *Eben Ezer*, *1 Sam. vii. 13.* as the same Sir *J. Marsham* observes: Who supposes *Eli* to have died in the midst of this Servitude, that is, twenty Years before

before this Victory. *Sampson* therefore only forely galled the *Philistines*, but they still continued to oppress the *Israelites*, as they did when he was born; for it appears by these Words, that when the Angel spake to them, they were under *the Hand*, that is, the Power of the *Philistines*, and so continued all his Days: For it is said, xv. 20. that he judged *Israel* Twenty Years, in the Days of the *Philistines*; that is, while they tyrannized over *Israel*: From which Tyranny he was so far from being a compleat Deliverer, that he himself was taken and bound by them; nor had he ever any Command over the *Israelites*.

Ver. 6. *And the Woman came and told her Husband.*] The Angel seems to have appeared to her in the Field, and she acquainted her Husband with it when she came home.

Saying, A Man of God came unto me.] So they called Prophets.

And his Countenance was like the Countenance of an Angel of God, very terrible.] That is, venerable, or full of Majesty; for so the *Men of God*, I suppose, sometimes appeared; as may be gathered from the Story of St. *Stephen*, who being full of the Holy Ghost, when he stood before the Council of *Jerusalem*, his Face shone as if it had been the Face of an Angel, Acts vi. 15.

And I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his Name.] The Lustre of his Countenance struck such an Awe into her, that she made no Enquiry who he was, nor whence he came, and he was not pleased to tell her. Tho' the *Vulgar* (against both the *Hebrew* Text, the *Chaldee*, and the *LXX*) hath it, *She asked him who he was, and whence he came, and what was his Name, but he would not tell her.*

Ver. 7. *And he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive and bear a Son, and now drink no Wine, nor strong Drink, &c.*] She recites the Words of the Angel unto her Husband; who, as *Josephus* fancies, hearing her highly commend the Person who appeared to her, for his Beauty and Majesty, began to suspect her Chastity, which is a Conceit for which there is no Ground, but much against it.

Ver. 8. *Then Manoah intreated the LORD, and said, O my LORD, Let the Man of God, whom thou didst send, come again unto us.*] To make good the forenamed Conceit, *Josephus* makes this to be the Prayer of his Wife, that he might satisfy the Jealousy of her Husband; directly contrary to what is here expressly said, that *Manoah* made this Request. See *Lib. 5. Antiq. Cap. 10.*

And teach us what we shall do unto the Child which shall be born.] He did not in the least question his Wife's Chastity; no, nor blame her Credulity, but desired himself to see the Person (if God pleased) who had brought this good News to them, and to be informed, how they should educate the Child.

Ver. 9. *And God hearkned to the Voice of Manoah.*] Who appears by this, desired only further Satisfaction, in that which he already believed.

And the Angel of God came again unto the Woman, as she sat in the Field.] Where, I suppose, Ver. 6. he appeared to her before: And,

I think, all Interpreters agree, that it was on the very same Day.

And Manoah her Husband was not with her.] This is no Sign of his Jealousy, but rather quite contrary, that he had a great Opinion of her Virtue.

Ver. 10. *And the Woman made haste and ran, and shewed her Husband, saying, Behold, the Man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the other Day.*] The Word *other* is not in the *Hebrew*; but it may be translated, *To Day*. And, perhaps, he appeared to her at the first in the Morning, and now in the Evening.

Ver. 11. *And Manoah arose, and went after his Wife.*] Who led him the Way, to shew him where the Man was.

And came to the Man.] Whom his Wife had desired to stay a while, till she called her Husband to him, as *Josephus* probably enough conjectures: But I cannot imagine how he came to add, That when her Husband saw him, *ὁ δ' ἄνθρωπος ἐπαύετο τῆς ὑπονοίας*, he was not instantly rid of his Suspicion; for there is nothing like it in the following Words.

He said unto him, Art thou the Man that spakest unto the Woman?] And told her, She should have a Son.

And he said, I am.] The same *Jewish* Writer adds, That *Manoah* prayed him to tell him what he had said to his Wife; but the Angel replied, it was enough that he had told it her.

Ver. 12. *And Manoah said, Now let thy Words come to pass.*] These Words may be no more than a Wish, that what he foretold might prove true; tho' some look upon them as a Prayer to God, to make them good.

How shall we order the Child, and how shall we do unto him?] The *Hebrew* Word *Mischpat*, which we translate *Order*, signifies here, the Rule whereby he should live.

Ver. 13. *And the Angel said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the Woman, let her beware.*] This general Answer might have been sufficient; but that they might be the more careful, he adds in the next Verse, all the Particulars he had mentioned to his Wife, Ver. 4. and something more largely.

Ver. 14. *She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the Vine.*] i. e. Neither Grapes nor Raisins.

Neither let her drink Wine, nor strong Drink, nor eat any unclean Thing.] This seems to lay a Charge upon him, as well as her, to see this Abstinence observed.

All that I commanded her, let her observe.] Breed him up a *Nazarite* all the Days of his Life.

Ver. 15. *And Manoah said to the Angel of the LORD, I pray thee let us detain thee until we have made ready a Kid for thee.*] He desired him to stay and accept an Entertainment from them, which was antiently given to Strangers, especially when they appeared like more than ordinary Persons, *Gen. xviii. 3, 4, &c.* and was continued to these Days, *Judg. vi. 18*. Some think he intended to offer a Sacrifice of *Peace-Offerings*, and feast the Man of God with that Part which belongs to him that brought it to be offered.

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Ver. 16. *And the Angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy Bread.]* He was persuaded to stay, but not to taste of his Meat; for the Word *Bread* comprehends all Provision of Food.

And if thou wilt offer a Burnt-Offering, thou must offer it unto the LORD.] Or, *But* if thou halt a mind to express thy Thankfulness, offer a *Burnt-Offering*, which must be wholly sacrificed unto the LORD. A Prophet (as *Manoah* took this to be) might warrant Men to sacrifice, tho' they were not Priests, nor at the Tabernacle, as *Elijah* did at Mount Carmel.

For Manoah knew that he was an Angel of the LORD.] As he did, shortly after, when he appeared to be more than an Angel.

Ver. 17. *And Manoah said unto the Angel of the LORD, What is thy Name, that when thy Sayings come to pass, we may do thee Honour?] He desired they might shew themselves grateful to him, by making him some Present, which they could not do, unless they knew his Name, and where he dwelt. So Josephus interprets doing him Honour, ἵνα χάριν αὐτῷ ἢ δωρεὰν παρέχωνται, that they might give him Thanks, and bestow some Gift upon him.*

Ver. 18. *And the Angel of the LORD said unto him, Why askest thou after my Name, seeing it is secret?] Or rather (as it is in the Margin) it is wonderful; so the LXX θαυμάσιον, admirable. Whose Essence (for that is meant by Name in Scripture) is to be admired, but cannot be comprehended. This shews it was the LORD himself; that is, the WORD of the LORD, who was to be the Messiah; unto whom the Prophet *Isaiah* gives the same Name of *Pele* the Wonderful, Isa. ix. 6.*

Ver. 19. *And Manoah took a Kid, with a Meat Offering.]* Which usually attended the Burnt Offering, as we read in the Book of *Leviticus*.

And offered it upon the Rock unto the LORD.] He did not offer it, properly speaking, but laid it upon the Rock, as on an Altar, to be offered unto the LORD. And so the LXX προσήνεγκε, he brought it to be offered; he laid τὰς ἀγίας ἢ τὰ ἁγία ἐπὶ τῆς πέτρας, he laid the Bread and the Flesh upon the Rock.

And the Angel of the LORD did wondrously.] The Word *Angel* is not in the *Hebrew*, and therefore this is to be referred unto *Jehovah*, immediately foregoing, who appeared in the Form of an Angel, and now acted suitable to his Name *Pele* wonderful; unto which the Word *Maphli* (did wondrously) plainly alludes; that is, he brought Fire, it is probable, out of the Rock, as in the Days of *Gideon*. So *Josephus*; for we read of no Fire that *Manoah* brought, and yet there was a Flame, in which the Angel went up into Heaven.

And Manoah and his Wife looked on.] Which shews that *Manoah* was only a Spectator of what was done, but did not offer the Sacrifice.

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass, when the Flame went up toward Heaven from off the Altar.]* So that Part of the Rock is called where the Flesh and the Bread were laid, being, I suppose, a very great Stone, flat at the Top like an Altar.

VOL. II.

That the Angel of the LORD ascended in the Flame of the Altar.] In which he went up ὡς ἐν ὀχήνῳ (as *Josephus* speaks) as in a Chariot.

And Manoah and his Wife looked on it, and fell on their Faces to the Ground.] Being astonished, when they saw him, whom they took only for a Prophet, to be an Angel of the LORD; and, perhaps, worshipping the Divine Majesty, who had appeared in such an illustrious Manner to them, and praying him to preserve their Lives, which they thought in Danger by such a Sight.

Ver. 21. *But the Angel of the LORD did no more appear to Manoah and his Wife.]* There being no further Occasion for it.

Then Manoah knew that it was an Angel of the LORD.] By the wonderful Things that he did, and ascending up to Heaven in a Flame, which demonstrated his Cœlestial Nature, which could not be hurt by Fire.

Ver. 22. *And Manoah said unto his Wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God.]* This had been an old Opinion among the *Israelites*. See upon vi. 22.

Ver. 23. *And his Wife said unto him, If the LORD were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a Burnt-Offering, and a Meat-Offering, at our Hand.]* She seems to have had a better Consideration of the Thing than her Husband. and strongly argues him out of his Fears, as altogether unreasonable: And first she makes God's Acceptance of a Sacrifice from them, a plain Demonstration of his Favour to them; and his Acceptance of it appeared by his kindling a Fire himself, whereby it was consumed; and by the Ascension of the Angel in the Flame, as if he went to carry the Sacrifice unto God, and present it to him in Heaven.

Neither would he have shewed us all these Things.] Concerning the Birth of a Son, and the Manner of his Education, and his beginning the Deliverance of *Israel* from their Oppressors, of which there was no Hope, if God intended to take away their Lives from whom this Son was to issue.

Nor would he at this Time have shewn us such Things as these.] Appeared again and again unto them, to acquaint them with these Things, at a Time when such Visions were rare, and when they were in such Distress, that God seemed to have abandoned them to the Will of their Enemies. These were two unanswerable Arguments that they had no Reason to think God would take away their Lives, but continue them, for the fulfilling his Promise.

Ver. 24. *And the Woman bare a Son.]* We have no Direction whereby to know the Time of his Birth, but only this, That the Angel said before he was conceived, Ver. 5. That he should begin to deliver *Israel* from the Hands of the *Philistines*. Which is a plain Indication, they were then under their Power; that is, the Forty Years Oppression of the *Philistines* was begun; and, consequently, since his Twenty Years Judicature was in the Days of the *Philistines*, xv. ult. that is, during their Tyranny; he was born in the Beginning of it: For we cannot well suppose, that he began to be their Deli-

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verer before the Eighteenth Year of his Age, as Primate *Usher* observes in his *Annal. ad A. M.* 2849.

And called his Name Samson.] Which, *Josephus* saith, signifies *ἰσχυρὸν*, *strong*, or *robust*; but whence he derived it, I cannot imagine. Some think from *Shemesh*, which signifies *the Sun*, which is a Body of mighty Force. So St. *Hierom*, who thinks *Samson* is as much as *their Sun*; a great *Light of Israel*, as *David* is called.

And the Child grew, and the LORD blessed him.] As he grew up, there plainly appeared in him extraordinary Endowments of Body and Mind, which the LORD bestowed on him.

Ver. 25. *And the Spirit of the LORD began to move him.*] To do some unusual Things, beyond mere human Power, which were Specimens of an Heroical Virtue. The *Targum* translates it, *The Spirit of Fortitude or Courage*, &c.

At Times.] Upon certain Occasions, when it would be visible to the People, that God intended to work Deliverance by him.

In the Camp of Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.] See xvi. 31. There was no Army of the *Danites* encamped where *Samson* displayed his Valour; but this is the Name of a Place called *Machana-Dan* (*the Camp of Dan*) in which, perhaps, *Samson* lived. The Reason of this Name is given afterwards in the xviiith Chapter, Ver. 12. where there is an History of an Expedition of the *Danites*; which, though placed after this, yet was really before the Times of *Samson*. But this Camp, it appears by that Place, did not lie between *Zorah* and *Eshtaol*, but in the Tribe of *Judah*, or in the very Borders of it: Therefore the Word *and* must be here supplied; *in the Camp of Dan, and between Zorah and Eshtaol*, towards which that Camp lay. If this be not allowed, we must suppose, that the six hundred Men mentioned xviii. 11. made their Encampment between *Zorah* and *Eshtaol*, before they marched out of their own Country, and gave that Place the same Name which the other had near *Kirjath-jearim*, where they encamped the first Night.

C H A P. XIV.

Ver. 1. *AND Samson went down to Timnath.*] A City in his own Tribe, as we read *Josh.* xix. 47. (see there) but fallen, it is probable, into the Possession of the *Philistines*, near to whose Country it lay, who, at this Time, oppressed the *Israelites*, and made them their Tributaries, which did not hinder, but rather promote all manner of Commerce between them.

And saw a Woman of Timnath, of the Daughters of the Philistines.] That is, he fell in love with her; according to the vulgar Saying among the *Greeks*, *ἐκ τῆ ὀφθαλμοῦ τὸ ἐρᾶν*, *from looking comes loving*.

Ver. 2. *And he came up and told his Father and his Mother.*] This was a Part of the Honour they thought was owing to their Parents, to advise with them about their Marriage, of which they did not treat, but left it to their Parents.

So it seems, by this, to have been in ancient Times, though their Children were of Age, (as *Samson* is now supposed to be) and, according to the later Doctors among the *Jews*, fit to contract Marriage themselves. See *Selden*, Lib. 2. *Uxor. Heb.* Cap. 3. And see above, xii. 9.

And said, I have seen a Woman in Timnath, of the Daughters of the Philistines; now, therefore, get her for me to Wife.] This was when *Samson* was about Twenty-two Years old, as Primate *Usher* computes it, who thinks *Eli* judged *Israel* at this Time in Civil Affairs; but Sir *J. Marsham* makes account, as I observed, he died in the middle of this Servitude.

Ver. 3. *And his Father and his Mother said unto him, Is there never a Woman among the Daughters of thy Brethren.*] That is, in their own Family.

Or among all thy People.] In the whole Tribe of *Dan*.

That thou shouldst go to take a Wife of the uncircumcised Philistines?] Which was against the Law of *Moses*, in *Exod.* xxxiv. 16. *Deut.* vii. 3. For though they were none of the seven Nations of *Canaan*, yet they were under the same Condemnation, and their Land was given to the *Israelites*.

And Samson said unto his Father, Get her for me, for she pleaseth me well.] His Mother, some think, expressed such Dislike to the Motion, that he applied himself wholly to his Father, and beseeched him to favour his Choice, because he was deeply in love with her.

Ver. 4. *But his Father and his Mother knew not that it was of the LORD.*] He felt some divine Motion in him, which carried him to this Place to seek a Wife; but his Parents knew not of it, till he told them (as some think) and then readily consented.

That he sought an Occasion against the Philistines.] Which he knew this Treaty of Marriage would give him, whether it succeeded or miscarried.

For at that Time the Philistines had Dominion over Israel.] They were still, as they had been several Years, under the Power of the *Philistines*, who treated them, it is likely, with such Scorn and Contempt, as if they had been their Slaves.

Ver. 5. *Then went Samson down, and his Father, and his Mother, to Timnath.*] He overcame them by his Importunity; or, perhaps, told them, as I said before, what a Motion he felt from God, to desire this Match.

And came to the Vineyards of Timnath.] Unto which he turned aside, upon some Occasion not here mentioned.

And behold a young Lion roared against him.] Came with full Mouth (as we speak) to devour him. By this, and many other Places, it appears, there were Lions in *Judæa*, from whence several Places had their Names, as *Lebaoth*, *Josh.* xv. 32. and *Beth-lebaoth*, xix. 6. Every one also knows, that a young Lion, come to his full Strength, was the fiercest of all other. And so *Cephir* (*Kimchi* observes) is used for a Lion grown bigger than *Gur*, which signifies a Lion's Whelp.

Ver. 6. *And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him.*] The same Spirit, mentioned in the last Verse of the foregoing Chapter; which endued him with extraordinary Courage, and Undauntedness of Mind, together with a supernatural Strength of Body.

And he rent him, as he would have rent a Kid.] That is, as easily and speedily. The Hebrew Word certainly signifies to *tear in Pieces*, and therefore, if it be true which *Josephus* saith, (*Lib. 5. Antiq. Cap. 10.*) That he throttled him with his Hand, (*ἀγχεῖ τοῖς χερσὶ*) the Meaning is, that after he had strangled him, he rent him in Pieces.

And he had nothing in his Hand.] If he had encountred him being armed with some Weapon, it had been a bold Action; but when he was naked, to receive his Assault, was a miraculous Resolution: By which he was encouraged to undertake greater things; as *David* was by the same Power given him.

But he told not his Father, nor his Mother, what he had done.] Being afraid perhaps that this Action might come to the Ears of the *Philistines*; which might make them jealous of him.

Ver. 7. *And he went down and talked with the Woman.*] Discoursed with her about Marriage; which he propounded to her.

And she pleased Samson well.] All things were agreed, and she was espoused to him: But before the Espousals she was converted to the Jewish Religion, and made an entire Profelyte, as *R. Levi ben Gersom*, and *Moses Mikotzi*, and other Hebrew Doctors say; and then it was not unlawful to marry a Stranger, as *Joshua*, they say, did *Rahab*. See *Selden*, *Lib. V. de Jure Nat. & Gent. Cap. 15.* and *Buxtorf, De Sponsalibus & Divortiiis, Sect. 31.*

Ver. 8. *And after a time.*] In the Hebrew it is, *after Days*; a Year, as that Phrase often signifies, and is so translated by us, *Exod. xiii. 10.* where *Mijanim jamim* is rightly translated, *from Year to Year*. See also *Gen. iv. 3.* and *Chap. xi.* of this Book, *Ver. 4.*

He returned to take her.] To compleat his Marriage; which was not wont to be celebrated between a Man and a young Virgin, till twelve Months after the Espousals, (as the Hebrew Doctors say) that she might have so much Time to adorn herself, and make herself every way fit for Marriage. See *Selden*, *Lib. 2. de Uxor. Hebr. Cap. viii.* But if in that twelve Months time she lay with any other Man, it was accounted Adultery, and punished with Death; because she was really his Wife.

And he turned aside to see the Carcass of the Lion.] Which was now a mere Skeleton, the Flesh being all consumed: And so the Syriac Interpreter here renders it.

And behold, there was a Swarm of Bees, and Honey in the Carcass of the Lion.] Bees are observed by *Aristotle*, and others, to abhor stinking Smells, and to abstain from Flesh; which hath made some think it strange that a Swarm of Bees should breed in the Carcass of a Lion: But they did not consider, that Time had consumed the Flesh, or it was eaten up by Birds and Beasts, and nothing but the bare Bones re-

mained; in which the Bees did not breed, but settled themselves when they swarmed, as they have done sometimes in dead Mens Skulls, and in their Tombs. See *Bochart* in his *Hierozyicon*, *Pag. 2. Lib. 4. Cap. x.* and *Vossius de Orig. & Progressu Idolol. Lib. 4. Cap. 72.*

Ver. 9. *And he took thereof in his Hand.*] Or, as the Syriac translates it, *It dropped into his Hands*, from the Combs, that is, which they had made either in the Belly, as *St. Ambrose* thinks, or in the Breast, as *Josephus*, or (which *Vossius* rather thinks) in the Head, or in the Mouth of the Lion, as the LXX and *Vulgar* understand it: Though *Bochartus* thinks that instead of *ἐν σώματι* in the Mouth, it should be read in the LXX *ἐν σώματι λέοντος*, in the Body of the Lion.

And went on eating.] Which was not unlawful, in case of Hunger, though it was found in a Carcass; because such Ceremonial Laws as forbid such Things, were not observed in Cases of Necessity: As appears by *David's* eating the Shew-Bread, and *Elijah's* eating Food brought him by Ravens.

And came to his Father and Mother.] From whom he had turned aside for a while, as he did when they first went to *Timnath*, *Ver. 5.*

And he gave them, and they did eat.] Wild Honey being delicious Food in that Country, as many Places shew, *Deut. xxxii. 13.* and *Psal. lxxxi. 16.*

But he told them not that he had taken the Honey out of the Carcass of the Lion.] For then perhaps they would not have eaten it.

Ver. 10. *So his Father went down unto the Woman.*] (Together with his Wife and his Son) to demand her, who was espoused to *Samson*, to consummate the Marriage.

And Samson made there a Feast, for so used the young Men to do.] According to the Custom of all Countries: Which Feast was called by the Jews, *The Nuptial Joy*, with which no other was to be intermixed; and all Labour ceased, as long as it lasted. See *Selden*, *Lib. 2. Uxor. Hebr. Cap. xi. Pag. 172.*

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, when they saw him.*] What a goodly Person he was.

That they brought Thirty Companions to be with him.] Her Friends, out of Respect to him, brought this great Number of Bridemen, to honour his Nuptials: But some of the Jews think they had a further End in it, that they might serve as a Guard to him, if he should attempt any Disturbance; of which, they fancy, the *Philistines* were afraid, when they saw he was a Man of Might.

Ver. 12. *And Samson said unto them, I will now put forth a Riddle unto you.*] This shews how ancient the Custom was (which we find afterward among the Greeks) of proposing Questions to be resolved in their Computations and Feasts; that they might not be spent merely in dull eating and drinking, but there might be something to exercise and whet the Wits of the Company: And they called such Riddles as these, which were contrived to puzzle Mens Thoughts, by the Name of *γρίφαι*, which the Scholiast upon *Aristophanes* defines to be *παροίνιον ζήτημα*, a Question put among their

Cups. *Athenæus* discourses largely of such *Problems*, as they also called them, in his *Deipnosophists*. See *Bochart* in his *Hierozyicon*, Pag. 2. Lib. 4. Cap. 12.

If you can certainly declare it, within the Seven Days of the Feast.] So long the Nuptial Solemnity was wont to continue in ancient Times, *Gen. xxix. 27.* They could not shorten the Days, as the *Jewish* Doctors tell us, but they might lengthen them; as they did at *Tobit's* Marriage, when the Solemnity continued fourteen Days, though according to Custom they were bound to keep but three, she being a Widow, as *Selden* observes in the forenamed Book, Pag. 185. and *Buxtorf* in his *Synagoga Judaica*, Cap. 35.

And find it out, then I will give you Thirty Sheets, and Thirty Change of Garments.] The Greeks followed this Example, and gave Rewards to him who resolved the Question proposed, but set a Mulct on those that could not.

Ver. 13. *But if you cannot declare it, then you shall give me Thirty Sheets, and Thirty Change of Garments.*] Most take *Sidinim* (from whence the Word *Sindon* seems to come) for such Linen Cloths, as the whole Body may be wrapped in; and therefore properly translated *Sheets*: And *Change of Garments* signifies new Robes, which they might change for the old: But of the Word *Sindon*, see *Braunius de Vestitu Sacerd. Hebr. Lib. 1. Cap. 7. N. 7.*

And they said unto him, Put forth thy Riddle, that we may hear it.] They agreed to the Conditions, and bad him propound it.

Ver. 14. *And he said unto them, Out of the Eater came forth Meat; and out of the Strong came forth Sweetness.*] The Opposition is manifest in the first Part of the Riddle, but not in the second; for Weakness is opposed to Strength, not Sweetness, whose Opposite is Bitterness, or Sharpness: But *Bochartus* hath ingeniously observed, that these two Words are sometimes confounded; for in the *Arabick* Language, the Word *Mirra*, which signifies Strength, comes from *Marra*, which signifies to be bitter: And so it is among the *Latins*, where *Acer* a sharp Man, is as much as a valiant Man, who eagerly (as we speak) engaged his Enemies: And this very Word (as he and others have noted) is used of Lions, whom *Ovid* in his *Fasti* calls

~~Genus~~ *Genus acre leonum.*

And therefore the Riddle is truly this: *Food came from the Devourer, and Sweetness from that which is eager and sharp, i. e. Fierce.*

And they could not in Three Days expound the Riddle.] Whereupon (it appears by what follows) they applied themselves to his Wife, and desired her (with good Words, it is likely, at first) to try what she could do by her Caresses, to persuade him to unriddle it to her.

Ver. 15. *And it came to pass, that on the Seventh Day.*] Which was the last Day of the Feast; when they were in Danger to lose their Wager.

They said unto Samson's Wife, Entice thy Husband, that he may declare to us the Riddle.]

By letting her know it; who they expected would tell it them:

Lest we burn thee and thy Father's House with Fire.] From Intreaties, they now betake themselves to Threatenings, and those very terrible; which they concluded would make her as pressing upon them, as they were upon her.

Have ye called us.] This signifies that they were invited by her Friends to the Feast.

To take what we have?] To make us pay very dear for our good Cheer.

Is it not so?] Will not your Kindness conclude in Rudeness, by stripping us of our Raiment?

Ver. 16. *And Samson's Wife wept before him.*] She added Tears to her Intreaties.

And said, Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not; Thou hast put forth a Riddle unto the Children of my People, and hast not told it me.] This was prudent enough, to pretend to doubt of his Affection, because he concealed this Secret from her; for a new married Couple are usually so kind, as freely to unbosom themselves one to another.

And he said unto her, Behold, I have not told it my Father, and my Mother.] With whom he had been long acquainted.

And shall I tell it thee?] Whom he did not yet so well know, as to be sure she could keep a Secret.

Ver. 17. *And she wept before him the Seven Days while the Feast lasted.*] That is, the rest of the Seven Days of the Feast, which remained after the third, she importuned him continually with Tears; and upbraided him, I suppose, with Want of Kindness to her, as the foregoing Verse imports.

And it came to pass on the Seventh Day, that he told, because she lay sore upon him.] Made him very uneasy by her Importunity; which he could not resist, though he had conquered the Lion.

And she told the Riddle to the Children of her People.] For whom she had more Affection than for her Husband; or feared their Displeasure more than his.

Ver. 18. *And the Men of the City said unto him on the Seventh Day, before the Sun went down.*] Just before the Time was expired, which was prefixed for the Solution of the Riddle.

What is sweeter than Honey? and what is stronger than a Lion?] This is a compendious Answer to the latter Part of the Question, which sufficiently comprehends the first: And *St. Ambrose* thinks, that as soon as this Answer was out of their Mouth, *Samson* immediately interposed and said, *What is more perfidious than a Woman?* Which he had out of *Josephus*, who saith the same; and something like it follows in the next Words.

And he said unto them, If ye had not plowed with my Heifer, ye had not found out my Riddle.] The Meaning is, That without the Assistance of his Wife, (whom he compares to a young Heifer, which is not yet subdued to the Yoke of Obedience), they had continued still as ignorant as they had been all the Time of the Feast.

Feast. *Rahab* indeed, and some others, take the Word *plowed* in a lascivious Sense; as if he meant that they had lain with his Wife, or otherwise they had not got the Secret out of her. But the Words will not bear this Interpretation; for he doth not say, *if ye had not plowed my Heifer*, (which might have been so interpreted) but *if ye had not plowed with my Heifer*; which plainly implies using her Help, to find out what they desired. See *Bochart. P. 1. Hierozoicon, Lib. 2. Cap. 41.*

Ver. 19. *And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him.*] Which he had not always; but at special Seasons it moved him, and gave him Power to do extraordinary Things, which otherwise had not been warrantable. See *Ver. 6. and xiii. ult.*

And he went down to Askelon.] A City of the *Philistines*.

And slew thirty Men of them.] As they were making merry, it is probable, either in the Field, or the City, at some publick Solemnity, when great Companies used to be gathered together, and to appear in their best Apparel.

And took their Spoil.] Whatsoever they had about them; and perhaps they that fled left a great many Things behind them.

And gave Change of Garments unto them that expounded the Riddle.] Together with the Sheets he promised; which he purchased, perhaps, with the Spoil.

And his Anger was kindled.] Against his Wife for betraying him, and against his Companions for their underhand Dealing.

And he went up to his Father's House.] Left his Wife with her own Relations, and went to live at home with his Father. It is plain by the whole Story, that *Timnath* lay low, there being a Descent from his Father's House to it, unto which they went up from thence, *Ver. 1, 2, 5, 7, 10.*

Ver. 20. *And Samson's Wife was given to his Companion.*] She it seems was as angry as he; and looking upon herself as forsaken, was easily persuaded to marry one of his Bridemen.

Whom he used as his Friend.] With whom he was more familiar, and treated him with greater Kindness, than he did the rest that honoured him with their Company. For he, I suppose, was the principal Brideman, who was called by the Name of *the Friend of the Bridegroom*, as we read in the Gospel of *St. John iii. 29.* See *Selden, Lib. 2. Uxor. Hebr. Cap. 16. P. 200, &c.* This Usage, no doubt, incensed *Samson* the more afterward against them; for he saw there was no Faith in any of them.

C H A P. XV.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass within a while after.*] In the *Hebrew* the Word is *Mijamim*; which in other Places, signifies *after a Year*, (see *xiv. 8.*) when his Anger was appeased.

In the Time of Wheat Harvest.] Which was about the Feast of *Pentecost*; a Time of great Joy.

That Samson visited his Wife with a Kid] Which was no contemptible Present, as appears by the Story of *Judab* and *Tamar*, *Gen. xxxviii. 17.* For it was a delicious Food, not only in *Judæa*, but in other Countries, as *Bocharius* hath shewn in his *Hierozoicon, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 2.*

And he said, I will go in unto my Wife, into the Chamber.] He attempted with the usual Freedom which Husbands have with their Wives, to go into her Apartment, and enjoy her Company.

But her Father would not suffer him to go in.] For the Reason following in the next Verse.

Ver. 2. *And her Father said, I verily thought that thou hadst utterly hated her.*] He thought he had good Grounds to conclude he would never come near her more, having not heard from him a whole Twelvemonth.

Therefore I gave her to thy Companion.] Whom it is likely she loved, having contracted an Acquaintance with him, by the Friendship he had with her Husband, *xiv. ult.* For tho' she was (as the *Hebrew* Doctors suppose) a Profelyte to the *Jewish* Religion, yet she was not so well instructed as to know, that it was not lawful, by their Law, to marry another, till *Samson* had given her a Bill of Divorce; which he had not done, intending to return again to her.

Is not her younger Sister fairer than she? take her, I pray thee, instead of her.] He had no mind to quarrel with *Samson*; and therefore endeavoured to assuage his Anger with the Offer of his other Daughter, who was more beautiful than her who had forsaken him. This indeed was contrary to the Law of *Moses*; but the *Philistines* it seems continued their old, abominable Customs, which God intended, by giving his Law, to abolish, *Levit. xviii. 24, 27, 30.*

Ver. 3. *And Samson said concerning them, Now shall I be more blameless than the Philistines, tho' I do them a Displeasure.*] He seems to have turned away in Scorn and Indignation, without making a Reply to his Father-in-Law; but told the next Persons he met, that he would be revenged of the *Philistines* for the Wrong that had been done him; and that they might blame themselves for the Mischief he intended them. By which it appears, that the People of that Place approved of this Marriage, and perhaps honoured it by their Presence; whom *Samson* resolved therefore to chastise, not as a private Person, but as appointed by God to vindicate the Oppression of the *Israelites*. Which *Grotius* thinks he did *ex naturali jure*, as a Piece of natural Justice. See *Lib. 2. de Jure Belli & Pacis, Cap. 20. Sect. 8. N. 3.*

Ver. 4. *And Samson went and caught three hundred Foxes.*] Some make a Difficulty to believe this, because Foxes are subtle Creatures, and not easily caught: But they should consider such Things as these, which *Bochartus* hath represented, that this Country abounded with Foxes, from whence several Places had their Names, particularly one in the Tribe of *Dan*, (see *Chap. i. 35. and Josh. xix. 42.*) and that under this Name of Foxes may be comprehended a Creature very like a Fox, called *Thoes*, which

which go together in Herds ; so that two hundred (as good Authors report) have been seen in a Company together. And next, it is not said he caught these at one Time, or in a Day and a Night ; but there might be a Week or a Month's Time allowed for the Accomplishment of his Design ; in which his Servants, and Neighbours, and Friends, no doubt, assisted him, if he desired it ; so that such a Number might be caught in a short Time : For they were not caught, as some imagine, only by hunting, but in Snares and Nets, as he demonstrates in his *Hicrozoicon*, Lib. 3. Cap. 13. Where, in answer to such as ask why he chose Foxes, rather than Dogs, or some other Creatures, he thinks it is sufficient to say, that he brought about two Ends ; by the same means freeing the Country from a great many noxious Animals, by which he did much Hurt unto their Enemies.

And took Fire-brands, and turned Tail to Tail.] Which he tied together with a Cord ; yet not close, but at a Distance, that they might run the better.

And put a Fire-brand in the midst between two Tails.] Which he so fastened, that it should not fall off by their Motion.

Ver. 5. *And when he had set the Brands on fire, he let them go into the standing Corn of the Philistines.*] Near unto which he let them loose ; and they naturally ran into it to hide themselves from the Fire ; of which they are observed to be afraid. Beside, being coupled, they could not run into their Holes.

And burnt up both the Shocks, and also the standing Corn.] By this it appears, that it was in the midst of Wheat-harvest when this was done ; some Corn being cut, and others still standing ; but all consumed. For the Fire being once begun, the Foxes were the more affrighted, and desiring to run from it, this still carried it to another Place, where there was Corn left, till they had burnt it quite up : Beside it is observed by the same Author, that Foxes do not run straight forward, but they make many Turnings, by which means they destroyed the more.

With the Vineyards and Olives.] Foxes are observed to love Grapes, and *Solomon* speaks of them as noxious to Vineyards, *Cant.* ii. 15. whither they ran to satiate their Hunger, after they had been long kept up by *Samson*. Some think, that as Part of the three hundred Foxes were sent among the Corn, so the other Part among the Vines and Olives : Or, perhaps, being all let into the Corn, and finding the Flame increasing there, they went to seek Shelter in the Vineyards, whither they carried the Fire.

Bochartus observes a very famous Monument of this Fact of *Samson's*, in *Ovid's* fourth Book of his *Fasti* ; where he saith, the Romans were wont every Year in the Middle of *April*, to let loose some Foxes in the *Circus*, with burning Torches fastened unto their Backs. The Original of which Custom, he justly thinks, could not be from so small an Occasion, as *Ovid* mentions, from the Report of an old Man he met withal. But that it was derived from hence, may well be questioned ; because, tho' it fell out at the same Time of the Year that

Samson did this Thing, yet one can give no Reason why the *Phœnicians* (from whom the *Romans* must be supposed to borrow it) should celebrate the Memory of this Mischief which *Samson* did them, in such a Representation of it. See him, in the Place before-mentioned, P. 856, 857, &c.

Ver. 6. *Then the Philistines said, Who hath done this ?*] The Owners of the Corn, or perhaps the Country in general, made an Enquiry after the Author of this Mischief.

And they answered, Samson the Son-in-law of the Timnite, because he had taken his Wife, and given her to his Companion.] Some of those who heard *Samson's* threatening Words, (Ver. 3.) it is likely, gave this Information.

And the Philistines came up, and burnt her and her Father with Fire.] I suppose they burnt their House, and them in it. Whereby that very Calamity came upon her, which she sought to avoid by betraying her Husband, xiv. 15.

Ver. 7. *And Samson said, Though you have done this.*] The Words in the *Hebrew* are a concise Form of Speech, *If ye had done after this manner* ; that is, punished them sooner for the Injury done him, it might have seemed Love of Justice ; but now they did it only out of Love to themselves.

Yet will I be avenged of you.] Or, but I will surely take a further Revenge of you. Unto which, no doubt, he was moved not by his own private Spirit, but by that Spirit which raised him up to deliver God's People from their Oppressors.

And then I will cease.] That is, unless they gave him further Occasion, there should be an End of this Quarrel.

Ver. 8. *And he smote them Hip and Thigh.*] It is hard to understand the Meaning of this ; of which *Josephus* only saith, that he slew many of them, ἐν πεδίῳ τῶν Παλαιστίνων, in a Field of the Philistines ; but saith not a Word concerning the Import of *Hip and Thigh*. But the *Chaldee Paraphrast* interprets it, he smote both Footmen and Horsemen, the one resting on their Legs, (as the *Hebrew* Word *Schock* signifies) and the other on their Thighs, as they sat close to their Horses. They that think this to be forced, take the Meaning to be, that he smote them both on their Legs and their Thighs, as they fled away, so as to disable them from any Service, tho' he did not kill them. I omit other Interpretations.

With a great Slaughter.] The Word is, with a great Stroke, and so the *LXX* translate it, which agrees well with the last Interpretation, that he forely wounded them.

And he went down.] With respect to the Country of the Philistines, he went up (as appears by the next Verse) but from the mountainous Part of *Judæa*, where he was, he first went down.

And dwelt in the Top of the Rock Esbam.] A strong Place in the Tribe of *Judab*, (as *Josephus* relates) to the Top of which, no more than one Man could come abreast, as we speak. By all this, and by what follows in the rest of his History, it is plain that *Samson* had no Commission from God, nor was moved by him to raise

raise an Army, and make open War (as *Gideon*, and *Jephthah*, and others did) for the Deliverance of *Israel* from the Yoke of the *Philistines*, but only to weaken them, and to keep them in Awe, that, out of dread of him, they might be less cruel in their Oppression. And this, no doubt, he understood to be all that God intended to do by him, from the Words of the Angel, *xiii. 5. He shall begin to deliver Israel.*

Ver. 9. Then the Philistines went up and pitched in Judab.] With a great Number of Men, as if they intended an absolute Conquest of their Country.

And spread themselves in Lehi.] A Place so called afterwards, from the Jaw-bone wherewith *Samson* smote them.

Ver. 10. And the Men of Judab said, Why are ye come up against us ?] Since they paid their Tribute, (as *Josephus* observes) and had committed no Offence against them, not having taken part with *Samson* in any thing he had done, they might well expostulate with them about this Invasion.

And they answered, To bind Samson are we come up.] They soon satisfied them, that they had no Quarrel with them, but only with *Samson*, whom, if they would deliver up bound to them, they would withdraw their Army.

To do to him, as he hath done to us.] Punish him for the Injuries he had done them; or rather, put him to Death, as he had killed many of them.

Ver. 11. Then Three thousand of the Men of Judab went to the Top of the Rock Etbam.] In the Hebrew it is *went down*, i. e. into the Cave where he was in the Top of the Rock: For it is said, *Ver. 13. That they brought him up to the Philistines*, whereas from the Top of the Rock, it was *down*.

And said unto Samson, Knowest thou not, that the Philistines are Rulers over us ?] And therefore not to be offended by us.

What is it that thou hast done unto us ?] To provoke them to come against *Judab*.

And he said unto them, As they did unto me, so have I done unto them.] He saith nothing of any Motion he had from God to do what he had done, but only tells them, that he had merely requited the Wrong he had received from the *Philistines*.

Ver. 12. And they said unto him, We are come down to bind thee, that we may deliver thee into the Hands of the Philistines.] They came with a little Army, to shew they could by Force take him; but they rather desired he would quietly resign himself to them, that they might deliver him bound to the *Philistines*.

And Samson said unto them, Swear unto me, that ye will not fall upon me yourselves.] He doth not upbraid them with their base Cowardise, in coming so many against one Man, and that to give up their Deliverer into their Enemies Hands, but consents to their Desire, on Condition that they would solemnly engage to do him no Hurt themselves; for he was unwilling to shed the Blood of his Brethren, as he might have done, if they had attempted any thing against him.

Ver. 13. And they spake unto him, saying, No, but we will bind thee fast, and deliver thee into their Hands; but surely we will not kill thee.] They promised to do as he desired, if he would submit to be bound and delivered unto the *Philistines*, who would not be otherwise satisfied.

And they bound him with two new Cords, and brought him up from the Rock.] To put him absolutely into the Power of the *Philistines*: For two Cords, and those fresh and new, wherewith they bound him, were sufficient to shew their real Desire to comply with their Demands.

Ver. 14. And when they came unto Lehi.] Where the *Philistines* had spread themselves, *Ver. 9.*

The Philistines shouted against him.] As Soldiers used to do, when they had gotten a great Victory, their mischievous Enemy being fallen into their Hand.

And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him.] Or, *But the Spirit of the LORD, &c.* Their Joy was instantly quashed; for by the mighty Power of God, the Cords immediately snapped in sunder.

The Cords that were upon his Arms became as Flax, that was burnt with Fire.] Which is consumed in a Moment.

And his Bands loosed from his Hands.] The Hebrew, to express how speedily and easily they were loosed, saith, *they melted*, or were dissolved, as Wax is by the Fire.

Ver. 15. And he found a new Jaw-bone of an Ass.] Of an Ass that had not been long dead. So the Word *Terijab* signifies, which *Kimchi* here saith is an Arabick Word, signifying moist and fresh, and therefore not so brittle as one that is dry, and hath laid long in the Air and the Sun. See *Bochart*. in his *Hieroicoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 15.

And put forth his Hand and took it.] The Providence of God laid it in his Way, that he might not be wholly unarmed, when he had a numerous Company of Enemies to deal withal.

And slew a thousand Men therewith.] The *Philistines*, no doubt, were strangely amazed, to see the Cords fall so easily, and suddenly, from his Hands, and to see him come boldly, or rather furiously, towards them, which put them in a Confusion, and gave him such Advantage against them, that he made this great Slaughter among them; wherein was fulfilled the Promise of *Moses*, *Levit. xxvi. 8.* which was repeated by *Joshua*, *xxiii. 10.* where he saith expressly, *One Man of you shall chase a Thousand.* It is not unlikely also, that the *Philistines* might fear, the Men of *Judab*, on this Occasion, would join with him, which made them turn their Backs, and expose themselves to Slaughter. But it was by a wonderful Strength which God infused into him, that he was able to pursue them so long, till he had done such Execution, which is incredible only to those who do not consider the Power of God, who can raise our Powers to what Degree he pleases, and enfeeble the Spirits of those who oppose his Designs: So that they shall have no Power to help themselves. It may not be amiss also here to note, that there are Instances of Men,

Men, who, by their natural Courage, have made great Havock among their Enemies : For *Flavius Vopiscus* reports, That *Aurelian*, in the *Sarmatick War*, slew *Forty-eight* Men with his own Hands, in one Day ; and in divers Days, *Nine hundred and Fifty* : Upon which the Boys made a Song, and shouted in their Dances after a military Manner, *Mille, Mille, Mille, Mille, Mille, Mille, decollavimus. Unus homo, Mille, Mille, &c. Mille, Mille, vivat, qui Mille, Mille occidit.* And upon another Occasion, another little Song was made of him, which *Salmasius* found thus disposed in antient MS.

*Mille Sarmatas, Mille Francos
Semel & Semel occidimus
Mille Persas quærimus.*

Ver. 16. *And Samson said.*] Then he composed a triumphant Song.

With the Jaw-bone of an Ass, Heaps upon Heaps ; with the Jaw-bone of an Ass, have I slain a Thousand Men.] This seems to have been the Beginning, and, perhaps, the End of the Song. In which Words, *Belebi bachamor chamorcha morathaim*, every one may observe a graceful Allusion, *Chamor* signifying, both an *Ass*, and also an *Heap*.

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass, that when he had made an end of speaking.*] Of reciting the Song before mentioned, which contained more than these few Words, as this Phrase seems to import.

That he cast the Jaw-bone out of his Hand.] Which he held there, while he was speaking.

And called that Place Ramath-lebi.] That is, the Projection, or casting away of the Jaw-bone, as the *Chaldee* and *Kimchi* interpret it ; for so the Word *Rama* signifies, to throw any thing from one. It is called, Ver. 9. and 14. simply *Lebi*, it being usual to leave out the Beginning of Names, as I have often observed, *Salem* being put for *Jerusalem*, and *Sbittim*, for *Abel-Sbittim*, &c.

Ver. 18. *And he was sore athirst.*] By his great Toil in the Fight, and by his speaking so long, and so earnestly, as it is likely he did afterwards.

And he called on the LORD, and said, Thou hast given this great Deliverance into the Hand of thy Servant.] This is an express Confutation of the Fancy of *Josephus*, that God sent this Thirst upon him, as a Punishment for not giving him the Glory of his Victory, but ascribing it to his own Strength ; for which I can see no Colour : For though God be not mentioned in his Song, but only the Jaw-bone, yet that was in itself so weak an Instrument, that his acknowledging twice it was the only thing wherewith he slew so many, was a sufficient Signification, that he ascribed not the Victory to human Power, but to the Power of God, whose Spirit he felt come mightily upon him, when he set upon them : But what is there tacitly insinuated, is here in so many Words expressed.

And now shall I die for Thirst, and fall into the Hands of the Uncircumcised ?] It seems he was very faint, for want of some Refreshment, which

made him so earnestly implore Relief from God, who, he knew, would not fail to supply him in so great a Necessity : For the Remembrance of former Benefits, when we thankfully acknowledge them, is a mighty Support to Faith, in the Expectance of future ; beside, he represents himself to God, as a *Servant* of his, who had taken all this Pains, not to satisfy his own Revenge, but by his Instigation, and for the Deliverance of his People.

Ver. 19. *And God clave an hollow Place that was in the Jaw.*] The Hebrew Word *Maetes*, properly signifies the Socket in which the great Teeth in the Jaw are fastened (as *Bochartus* evidently proves, P. 1. *Hieroz.* Lib. 2. Cap. 16.) one of which Teeth he made to drop out, and then caused Water to come forth out of that hollow Place : But our great *Primate* follows those who think God made a Clift in some Part of the Earth, in that Place called *Lebi*, from whence he made a Fountain of Water to spring up. And so *Josephus* saith, He brought it, κατὰ τὸς πέτρας, out of a certain Rock.

And there came Water thereout.] From this Cavity he caused Water to issue, (whereas Blood is wont to flow when a Tooth is plucked out) just as he brought Water out of a Rock in the Wilderness, and made the Meal and the Oil to multiply in the Widow of *Sarepta's* Vessels.

And when he had drunk.] It is probable, he took up the Jaw, when he saw the Water bubble out of it, and let it run into his Mouth, till he had quenched his Thirst.

His Spirit came again and he revived.] He was so spent, it seems, that he was ready to die, till God sent him this Water, unto which his Power gave such a Spirit, that it was as reviving as a Draught of Wine.

Wherefore he called the Name thereof, Enbakkore, which is in Lebi.] Or, as *Bochart*, I think, more truly renders it, *Enbakkore-asher belebi* ; that is, the Fountain of him that called, which is in the Jaw. See him in the above mentioned Place, P. 205.

Unto this Day.] Some have imagined, that the Fountain continued in *Lebi*, unto the time that this Book was written : But *Bochart* there observes, that these Words, *Unto this Day*, are not to be joined with those next before ; for they are separated by an Accent which divides them ; and therefore the Meaning is, that it is called to this Day, by the Name forementioned.

Ver. 20. *And he judged Israel in the Days of the Philistines, Twenty Years.*] All his Time, they remained under the Power of the *Philistines*, who, they confess, Ver. 11. were *their Rulers*, as they continued to be for Forty Years together, xiii. 1. of which these Twenty were a Part. In which he was not able to perfect their Deliverance, but only began it by several Damages he did them : But, after all, he left the *Israelites* under their Dominion ; nor was there any Deliverer arose till *Samuel*, who, I observed before, compleated what *Samson* began, 1 Sam. vii. 13.

C H A P. XVI.

Ver. 1. **T**HEN went Samson to Gaza.] His late Victory made him despise the Philistines, as Josephus thinks, (καταφρονῶν τῶν Παλαιστίνων) and adventure to go, in a Bravery, into one of their principal Cities, which lay in the South part of their Country, towards Egypt. But it seems to me more likely, that he went thither secretly and unobservedly, in the Dusk of the Evening, or in a Disguise; that he might the better spy in what Posture they were, and what Advantage he might possibly have of them.

And saw there an Harlot.] Who kept, it is likely, a Publick House to entertain Strangers; but was as publick herself; which had been the Condition of Rahab. So Josephus ἐν τῇ τῶν καὶ αὐγυλίων διατελεῖ, he took up his Lodging in one of the Publick Inns of the City.

And went in unto her.] Was ensnared by her Beauty, to lie with her.

Ver. 2. And it was told the Gazites.] The Magistrates of the City.

Saying, Samson is come hither.] By this it appears, his coming thither was not publicly known; but by some Means or other discovered: Perhaps, by the Woman herself into whose House he went, who gave private Information of his being there.

And they compassed him in.] The Meaning is not that they beset the House; for the next Words shew the contrary; That they intended to seize him, as he went out of the City.

And laid wait for him all Night, at the Gate of the City.] Especially in that Gate which led to his own Country.

And were quiet all Night.] Made no Noise, for fear he should be alarmed, and contrive some Way of Escape; or desperately set upon them, and break through the Guards.

Saying, In the Morning, when it is Day, we shall kill him.] He would fall into their Hands, they imagined; having no Apprehension of Danger.

Ver. 3. And Samson lay till Midnight.] When he was admonished, perhaps by a Dream, to be gone; or had some Intelligence from his Servants (whom he had set to watch) that they lay in wait for him.

And arose at Midnight.] In the dead time of the Night, when no body was stirring; and the Soldiers themselves, perhaps, asleep: Imagining he would lie till Morning.

And took the Doors of the Gate of the City, and the two Posts, and went away with them, Bar and all.] He did not stay to break them open, but plucked up the Posts out of the Ground, with the Doors hanging upon them, fast barred; which so astonished the Guards, that they had no Heart to follow him.

And put them upon his Shoulders.] He seems to have carried them a little Way in his Hands; and then lifted them up to his Shoulders, and carried them before their Faces in Triumph. Which argued a mighty Strength; and no less Confidence in God.

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And carried them up to the Top of an Hill, that is before Hebron.] Some take this Hill to have been near Hebron; which was twenty Miles from this Place. But it is more probable (as Peter Martyr conjectures) it lay between Gaza and Hebron; within the View of both: That the Inhabitants of the one City might behold them to their Confusion; and they of the other to their Encouragement to hope for Deliverance.

Ver. 4. And it came to pass afterward.] How long after is not known.

That he loved a Woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose Name was Delilah.] It is certain that Sorek was a Place in the Land of Judæa; famous for choice Vines (as Bochart observes, from Gen. xlix. 11. Isa. v. 2. Jer. ii. 21.) and not above a Mile and a half from Eschol; whence the Spies brought a Bunch of Grapes, for a Sample of the Fruitfulness of the Country. Unto this Place Samson retired to refresh himself, perhaps, after his Labours, with the Delights of it; and there saw a Woman, with whom he fell in Love. But whether she was a Woman of Israel, or one of the Daughters of the Philistines (who now were Rulers of the Country of Judah, xv. 11.) and whether he loved her as his Wife, or kept Company with her as an Harlot, is not here signified. St. Chrysostom, and others are of Opinion, that he was married to her. But then one would think there should have been some brief Mention of their Wedding Solemnities; or of his bringing her home to his own House. And the Philistines would not have been so bold, as to attempt to draw her into their Party, and bribe her to betray him into their Hands. Which argues she had not the Affection of a Wife to him; but was a mercenary Woman, that would do any thing to get Money. And so Josephus understands it, Παρέβαινε ὃ ἦδη τὰ πάτρια, &c. He forsook the Institutions of his Country, and followed the degenerate Manners of strange People, ἐργασίας γυναικὸς ἐταίριζομένης, being enamoured with an Harlot among the Philistines: Which was the beginning of all the Evils that befel him. For he did not keep her Company for a Night; but dwelt with her, and gave up himself so entirely to her, that he doted on her.

Ver. 5. And the Lords of the Philistines came up unto her.] There were five of them in all (as we read iii. 3.) who, it is likely, all joined together to make a Purse (as we speak) wherewith to corrupt her; and sent their Agents to make large Offers to her, if she would come into their Interests.

And said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great Strength lieth, and by what Means we may prevail against him.] It is probable, that he had often declared, that the Source of his Strength was a Secret, known only to himself; which they hoped he might, with her Blandishments, entice him to reveal unto her.

That we may bind him, and afflict him.] That she might not startle at the Proposal, they tell her, they had no Intention to kill him; but only to keep him fast in Chains, and afflict him; so as to make him humble, and bring him low, that he might not be able to do them more Mischief.

X

And

And we will give thee every one of us, Eleven hundred Pieces of Silver.] By which is commonly understood so many Shekels; which made in all five thousand five hundred, which make almost two Hebrew Talents. For the Jews make it a Rule, that where *Pieces of Silver* are mentioned, the Meaning is Shekels. See Gen. xxiii. 15.

Ver. 6. *And Delilah said unto Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, where thy great Strength lieth.]* She did not bluntly ask him this Question, but, as *Josephus* very probably tells the Story, the next time they were eating and drinking together, and he was caressing her, she fell into an Admiration of all his wonderful Deeds, and highly extolled them; desiring him to tell her, how he came so much to excel all other Men in Strength.

And wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee.] So that he should not be able to help himself.

Ver. 7. *And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven great Withs, that were never dried; then shall I be weak, and be as another Man.]* Her last Words, perhaps, made him suspect something. However, ἐτι φρονεῖν ἰσχυρὸς ἦν, (as *Josephus* speaks) he was yet strong in his Understanding, and not perfectly besotted on her; and therefore did not trust her with this important Secret, but answered her deceitfully. Which cannot be excused from being a downright Lye; unless we suppose he only jested with her, not believing she would take such an improbable thing for a Truth.

Ver. 8. *Then the Lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven green Withs, which had not been dried.]* It seems they lurked somewhere thereabout, that they might be informed speedily of what passed. And they took care to provide the Withs themselves, that there might be no Defect in them.

And she bound him with them.] Καθεύδοντα μεθύοντα, &c. She bound him hard with the Withs, when he was asleep, and full of Drink, as *Josephus* speaks.

Ver. 9. *Now there were Men lying in wait, abiding with her in the Chamber.]* In another Room of the House, near to that where *Samson* slept, she had placed a Band of Soldiers, (as *Josephus* also interprets it) who were ready, upon Notice, to seize him. This is an Argument that *Delilah* was not his Wife; for in his own House, where he had his Servants about him, it had not been possible for her to have placed Soldiers secretly in any Room, without their Knowledge.

And she said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson.] One would think, they might have set upon him when he was in a deep Sleep. But the Plot was otherwise laid between them and *Delilah*; and they thought it not safe to come near a sleeping Lion, for fear he should chance to awake, and tear them in pieces.

And he brake the Withs as a Thread of Tow is broken, when it toucheth the Fire: So his Strength was not known.] They found he was as subtle, as he was strong; having deluded both her and them.

Ver. 10. *And Delilah said unto Samson, Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me Lyes: Now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound.]* So as not to be able to free himself. The Hebrew Writers rightly observe, that she did not say this to him immediately after the other; but at the next Opportunity, she took Occasion to complain of his want of Kindness, in not acquainting her with what she desired to know; as if she was not able to keep the Secret of a Friend, which was not fit for any body else to understand; as *Josephus* expresses it.

Ver. 11. *If they bind me fast with new Ropes, that were never occupied, then shall I be weak, and be as another Man.]* He persists in his Resolution to delude her.

Ver. 12. *Delilah therefore took new Ropes, and bound him therewith.]* This looked more like Truth than the former, and she took care, no doubt, to have the strongest Ropes that they could get. And then made him a new Entertainment, where he eat and drank till he was heavy with Sleep; and then she took the Opportunity to bind him, as she had done before.

And said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson, (and there were Liers-in-wait in the Chamber.)] In the Inner Room, where they were formerly disposed so secretly, that *Samson* knew not of it; for if he had, he would have discovered her Treachery.

And he broke them from off his Arms like a Thread.] Which deterred them from breaking out upon him.

Ver. 13. *And Delilah said unto Samson, Hitherto thou hast mocked, and told me Lyes; tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound.]* She prays him now to deal sincerely with her; for she persisted as resolutely in her Attempts to draw the Secret from him, as he did in concealing it: Which he still continued to do.

And he said unto her, If thou weavest the Locks of my Head.] The Nazarites being bound never to cut their Hair, did not, I suppose, let it hang loose, but curled it up in Locks, or plaited and brodered it after the manner of a Chain: And *Samson's* Hair was distributed into Seven of these plaited Locks. See Dr. *Spencer* concerning this, L. 3. Cap. 6. Differt. 1. P. 585.

With the Web.] He seems to direct her to wrap these seven Locks about a Weaver's Beam (as the Chaldee understands it) or to weave them one within another, so that they should be but one Lock; and then he should be like another Man; which is here to be understood. And in this he comes a little nearer to the Truth; but still deceives.

Ver. 14. *And she fastened it with a Pin.]* That they might keep tight, and not be unloosed.

And said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson; and he awaked out of his Sleep.] This shews that she had taken the former Advantages of him in his Sleep.

And he went away with the Pin of the Beam, and with the Web.] And thereby appeared as strong as ever he was. For, as the Vulgar understands it, she fixed this Pin in the Earth; or as the LXX, in

in the Wall. But there is nothing like it in the Hebrew Text.

Ver. 15. *And she said, How canst thou say, I love thee, when thy Heart is not with me? Thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great Strength lieth.*] She now uses her utmost Art to overcome him; by telling him, I suppose, she would cast him off, because he did but pretend to love her; as appeared by his not trusting her: But notwithstanding her importunate Desire to be gratified in a small Request, he had no less than three times put a Cheat upon her.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her Words, and urged him.*] Repeated this often from Day to Day, most earnestly pressing him to give her a Proof of his real Affection, by disclosing this Secret.

So that his Soul was vexed unto Death.] He was upon such a Rack by two contrary Passions struggling in him; Love to her, and Care not to lose his Strength; that he was weary of Life; that is, very melancholy, and unconcerned what became of him.

Ver. 17. *That he told her all his Heart.*] God having forsaken him, because he had abandoned himself to sensual Pleasure; his Love of the Harlot prevailed over his Care of himself.

And said unto her, There hath not come a Razor upon my Head; but I have been a Nazarite from my Mother's Womb.] These Words were spoken with a greater Seriousness than any of the former; which made her conclude he had given her a true Account. For thus *Josephus* paraphrases, *I am under the Care of God; by whose Providence being born, I nourish my Hair; for God forbade that I should ever have it cut off. All my Strength lying in the Increase and Continuance of this Hair,* Lib. 5. Antiq. Cap. 10.

If I be shaven, then will my Strength go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other Man.] There have been Men of wonderful Strength, whose Memory is preserved in History; particularly by *Pliny*, Lib. 12. *Natural. Histor.* Cap. 20. and more are collected by *Caspar Schottus*, in his *Mirabilia Naturæ & Artis*, Lib. 3. Cap. 36. And now at my present Writing of this, there is more than one Person in this City, of extraordinary Strength. But there is a Demonstration that *Samson's* Strength wholly depended upon the Power of God, and was not inherent in himself; but came upon him when there was need, as long as he preserved himself consecrated unto God, by not shaving his Head, and observing all other Things belonging to the Vow of a *Nazarite*. Which was a Thing so notorious, that the Heathens were not ignorant of it; but from hence devised (as learned Men have observed) the Fable of *Nisus*, the King of *Megara*; upon whose Hair the Fortune of his Kingdom depended. See *Huetius* in his *Quæstiones Alnecanæ*, Lib. 2. Cap. 12. Sect. 28. and our Dr. *Jackson*, in his first Book on the *Creed*, Chap. 15. Paragr. 3.

Ver. 18. *And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his Heart.*] Which she perceived, as I said, by the Manner of his speaking.

She sent and called the Lords of the Philistines.] Who still, it seems, waited thereabouts, to see

what would be the Success of their Design; which she gave them Hopes she should at last accomplish. This could not but have been discovered by some of *Samson's* Servants, if he had had a Family there, as he would if he had been married. I look upon this therefore, as a Proof, that this Woman was not his Wife.

Saying, Come up this once; for he hath shewn me all his Heart.] She was afraid they would not have hearkened to her any more, having been so often deluded; which made her give them this full Assurance.

Then the Lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought Money in their Hands.] Which they never did before; but now shewed her the Reward was ready, if she performed her Work.

Ver. 19. *And she made him sleep.*] Having given him, as *Delrio* thinks, a sleeping Potion. Others think she had drawn him in to drink Wine (which *Josephus* supposes she had done in former Entertainments) unto which he not being accustomed, he was intoxicated with it. And having broken the Law of the *Nazarites* in this Point, was justly delivered up by God to suffer all that followed.

Upon her Knees.] Resting his Head, I suppose, upon her Knees. Or perhaps, she set him upon her Knees, and with her Arms about his Neck, expressed the greatest Affection to him, and Care of him.

And she called for a Man, and she caused him to shave off the seven Locks of his Head.] Which he did so gently, being a Man of Art, as not to awake him.

And she began to afflict him.] Not by any sensible Pain; but by weakening him, and bringing him low (as the Hebrew Word is often interpreted.) For as soon as the Razor touched his Head, his Strength began to be diminished.

And his Strength went from him.] When all the Locks were shaved off, his Strength quite failed him.

Ver. 20. *And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his Sleep.*] She cried so loud, and also shook him so much (out of pretended Kindness to him, that he might escape the Danger) that she roused him out of his Sleep.

And he said, I will go as at other times before, and shake myself.] She had so often said those Words, that he was in no Fear; but thought to do as he had done before, that is, prepare himself to fall upon them.

And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him.] Being newly awakened out of a profound Sleep, and scarce come to himself, he did not miss his Hair; and so had no Apprehension that God had deserted him.

Ver. 21. *But the Philistines took him.*] But he soon found he had no Power at all left to resist his Enemies; who laid hold on him, and took him Prisoner.

And put out his Eyes.] By a just Judgment of God, [as the *Mishna* observes in the Title *Sota*, Cap. 8. where they say, he followed the Delight of his Eyes, and so he was punished with the Loss of them. Which the Jews are wont to call, *Measure for Measure*. They did not put him

him to Death, much less cut him in Pieces, as their Hatred and Fury might have provoked them to do; for they had promised *Delilah* they would only bind him, and afflict or humble him, *Ver. 5.* and in those Days all Men made some Conscience of keeping their Word.

And brought him down to Gaza.] To be exposed there to Scorn, where he had exposed them to Shame, by carrying away the Gates of their City. It was a Place also of great Strength, where he would be kept secure; and it was remote also from his own Country.

And bound him with Fetters of Brass.] Put very strong, and heavy Fetters upon his Legs.

And he did grind in the Prison-house.] As Slaves were wont to do. See upon *Exod. xi. 5.* and *St. Hierom, Isa. xlvii. 2.* where this is turned to another Sense, according to the Conceit of many of the Jewish Doctors; but without any Ground, for it is threatened there as a Punishment to *Babylon*, and so it was inflicted here as a Piece of Drudgery, unto which *Samson*, as other Prisoners, was condemned.

Ver. 22. Howbeit the Hair of his Head began to grow again, after he was shaven.] Or (according to the Marginal Translation) *As when he was shaven.* That is, grew in Time to the same Length it was of before *Delilah* cut it off: So that though his *Nazariteship* was interrupted by the shaving of his Head, yet it was renewed, by letting his Hair grow, and observing all other Rules belonging to it. He could not offer Sacrifice indeed for his Expiation, (as the Law was in case of an Interruption) but repented, no doubt, of his Folly, and began his *Nazariteship* again, with Prayer to God for a Pardon of his former Violation of it: And in this State of Penitence he continued some Time; for his Hair would be a good while in growing again to its former Length: When, being restored to the Condition wherein he was before he lost the Favour of God, together with his Hair, the Divine Majesty was reconciled to him, and restored his former Strength; which grew and increased, as his Hair did.

Ver. 23. Then the Lords of the Philistines gathered themselves together.] Not immediately after the taking of *Samson*; but after he had been some Time in Prison, as appears by the Verse foregoing: For it is likely they made great Preparation for the Solemnity mentioned in the next Words.

For to offer a great Sacrifice to Dagon their God, and to rejoice.] To give Thanks to their God at a Festival, which they appointed, I suppose, on purpose to express their Joy for their taking *Samson* Prisoner: Or, as *Josephus* thinks, ἐορτὴς ἕως τοῖς Παλαισινοῖς δημοτελεῖς, there being a publick Festival kept among the *Philistines* (which all Nations had at certain Seasons) they made it more famous, by greater Sacrifices than ordinary, and by greater Feasting and Rejoycing, which were Expressions of their Thankfulness to their God; who is called *Dagon*, because, as *R. Solomon*, and many

others think, he was in the Form of a Fish, (for *Dag* signifies a Fish) from the Navel downward, and upward in an Human Shape. Certain it is, this God had an Human Shape in the upper Parts, for we read *1 Sam. ver. 4.* of his Head, and the Palms of his Hands; though nothing is there said of his Feet. It is certain also, that the *Syrians* abstained from Fish, as *Porphyrus* notes; at least from the Fish of that Lake hard by which the Temple of the famous Goddess *Derceto* stood, not far from *Askelon*: In which, as *Lucian* saith, in his *Dea Syria*, ἱερὰ ὄντα ἰεροὶ τρέφονται, sacred Fishes were bred. This *Derceto* was the same with *Venus*, as many learned Men think, whom the *Sidonians* called *Atarge*, and others *Artaga*; but most commonly *Astarte*, which, in the Scripture, is *Ashtaroth*, the Goddess of the *Sidonians*, *1 Kings xi. 5, 33.* *2 Kings xxiii. 13.* and of the *Philistines* also, *1 Sam. xxxi. 10.* whom the *Israelites* imitated, *1 Sam. vii. 3, 4.* And worshipping the Gods of those who ruled over them, no wonder they followed their wicked Manners, and gave themselves over to Fornication: Which is the best Account that can be given of *Samson's* living in this Sin, without Reprehension; the Nation being depraved, and having lost their ancient Discipline, which corrected this Vice; for their Law permitted no Harlot to be in *Israel*.

For they said, Our God hath delivered Samson, our Enemy, into our Hands.] All Nations had this Sense, that they owed all they enjoyed unto God: And especially made their Acknowledgments to such Gods as they worshipped, for the Victories they got over their Enemies.

Ver. 24. And when the People saw him.] For he was publicly exposed to all Mens View, in his Fetters, I suppose, and grinding in the Prison.

They praised their God.] Some Hymns, perhaps, were composed on this Occasion; which they sang in praise of *Dagon*.

And said, Our God hath delivered into our Hand, the Destroyer of our Country, which slew many of us.] This was Part of their Song, which the *Greeks* call *Pæan*: And they give the very same Epithet to *Samson*, that *Homer* doth to *Hector*, whom he frequently calls ἀνδραφόνον, The Slayer of Men.

Ver. 25. And it came to pass, when their Hearts were merry.] As they used to be with good Cheer, Musick, and such like Entertainments, at their Festivals.

That they said, Call for Samson.] The Lords of the *Philistines* ordered him to be sent for.

That he may make us Sport.] It is uncertain whether they meant, that they would make themselves Sport with him, by Flouts and Jeers; or that they would have him make them Sport, by ridiculous Gestures and Speeches: *Josephus* takes it in the first Sense.

And they called for Samson out of the Prison-house, and he made them Sport.] Perhaps they made him dance in his Chains, or play'd with him at some such Sport as we call *Blind-Man's-buff*: But it is hard to believe that such a generous Spirit as his, would submit to do any thing that should make them laugh; therefore they made them-

themselves all the Sport they could, by their Abuses of him, which he was forced to suffer.

And they set him between the Pillars.] That he might be the more visible to every one in the Place.

Ver. 26. *And Samson said unto the Lad, that held him by the Hand.]* And led him about, as he was directed.

Suffer me that I may feel the Pillars upon which the House standeth.] Which supported the Roof of it, as appears from Ver. 29.

That I may lean upon them.] To rest himself, pretending he was weary, as *Josephus* expounds it.

Ver. 27. *Now the House was full of Men and Women, and the Lords of the Philistines were there.]* Some think this House was one of their Temples, wherein they met to praise their God, and then to feast, as the Manner was, upon the Sacrifices which were offered on such Occasions. (See ix. 27.) And indeed no private House can be thought to have had a Room wide enough to contain such a Number of People: But their Temples were, in many Places, large enough, and made so on purpose that a vast Number might assemble in them; particularly that of *Diana* at *Ephesus* is celebrated for its Greatness, as well as for its Beauty and Riches; (see *Pliny*, Lib. 35. Nat. Hist. Cap. 14.) all the People round about, from all Parts, running thither at several Solemnities, as many have noted: But others think it was some Theatre, like those in After-times, built by the Romans, some of which were of a prodigious Bigness: See *Pliny*, in the same Book, Chap. 15. where he mentions two Theatres built by *C. Curio*, who was killed in the Civil Wars, on *Cæsar's* Side. They were made of Wood, so ample as to contain all the Roman People, (as he speaks) and contrived with such Art, that each of them depended upon one Hinge: Which moved *Pliny* to admire at the Madness of the People of Rome, who would venture into a Place, for their Pleasure, where they sat *tam infida instabilique sede*, in such an uncertain and unstable Seat; for if that Hinge had slipped, there had been a greater Slaughter, than at the Battle of *Cannæ*. This I mention, to silence the Cavils of those who fancy no such capacious Building could be made, as relied only on two Pillars; which is not so strange as this admirable Fabrick of *Curio*.

And there was upon the Roof about Three Thousand Men and Women, that beheld while Samson made Sport.] Every one knows that the Roof of their Houses and Temples were flat, so that Men might stand or walk there: But how they should see *Samson* from thence, we cannot conceive, unless we suppose there were Windows to open upon Occasion, whereby to look into the House; or perhaps there were Battlements at the Top, in the Inside (as in our Cathedrals) where this great Company of Men and Women stood: By whom we are to understand the Vulgar Sort; for the Lords of the *Philistines*, and Persons of Quality, were in the Body of the House.

Ver. 28. *And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O LORD GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God.]* A most ardent Prayer, proceeding from the Anguish of his Soul, as *Josephus* observes; nothing being more grievous than to be mocked, and exposed to publick Scorn, which he calls *δεινότερον τῶν κακῶν*, the worst of all Evils: But whether he spake these Words within himself, or, as some think, with an audible Voice, cannot be determined.

That I may be at once avenged of the Philistines, for the Loss of my two Eyes.] If this had proceeded from a Spirit of private Revenge, God would not have heard his Prayer, (for he doth not love to gratify Mens Passions) but that is a Proof, that this Desire proceeded from God; (as *St. Austin* understands it, Lib. 1. de Civ. Dei, Cap. 21.) who intended to punish the *Philistines* for oppressing *Israel*, as well as abusing *Samson*, and depriving him of his Eyes.

Ver. 29. *And Samson took hold of the two middle Pillars, upon which the House stood, and on which it was born up, &c.]* On which the Weight of the Roof relied.

Ver. 30. *And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines.]* He is not to be thought properly a Self-Murderer; for he was moved by an heroic Spirit from God himself, to make himself a Sacrifice (as I may call it) for the Good of his Country: And it is no more than great Soldiers do, who are content to lose their Lives, in Defence of a Post where they are placed, for the Preservation of the Army to which they belong. See *Grotius*, in his Book de Jure Belli & Pacis, Lib. 2. Cap. 19. Sect. 5. N. 4.

And he bowed himself with all his Might; and the House fell upon the Lords, and all the People that were therein.] But it was not by his Might, but by a miraculous Power of God, that this House was subverted, whereby all their Mirth and Jollity was extinguished in a Moment.

So the Dead which he slew at his Death, were more than they which he slew in his Life.] This last Act was the greatest of his whole Life: For he not only slew more, but Persons of greater Note, (their principal Rulers and Governors) and destroyed one of their Temples, (as most Authors take this House to have been) together with their God: Which must needs put those that survived into the greatest Consternation and Confusion.

This was a Thing known to the Heathen; for it is a very probable Conjecture of some great Men, that hence the Greeks framed the Fable of their *Hercules*; who lived about his Time, and whose Name is the same with *Samson's*, if it be derived from *Schemesh* the Sun: For *Hercules* is as much as *Or-chol*, that which enlightens all, i. e. the Sun. Of him it is reported, by *Herodotus*, That being bound in Egypt, he was brought in a pompous manner to be sacrificed to *Jupiter*; and resting a while, till he could be placed on the Altar, he broke out and slew all that were present.

Ver.

Ver. 31. *Then his Brethren, and all the House of his Father.*] By *Brethren* are commonly meant in Scripture, the nearest Kindred; and by *the House of his Father* is meant, all the rest of his Relations: Or, perhaps, after the Birth of this Child, God bestowed the Blessing of other Children upon *Manoah* and his Wife; as he did upon *Hannah*, after the Birth of *Samuel*.

Came down and took him.] By the Permission of the *Philistines*, who had so much Humanity (as all Nations anciently had) as not to prohibit Enemies from burying their Dead: But the *Israelites* were now in Subjection to the *Philistines*, and did not join with *Samson* in any of his Enterprizes; which he performed solely by himself: And beside, the *Philistines* were much humbled and mollified, no doubt, by this late Disaster.

And brought him up.] With some Pomp, or Solemnity, it is likely; he being a very great Man, and famous for his wonderful Exploits.

And buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol.] These were two Cities in the Tribe of *Dan*, (*Josh.* xv. 33.) but on the Frontiers of the Tribe of *Judah*, as some gather from *Nehem.* xi. 29.

In the Burying-Place of Manoah his Father.] To be buried in the Sepulchres of their Ancestors, was accounted a great Blessing by all Nations, as *Ezekiel Spanhemius* notes upon *Callimachus* his Hymn to *Diana*, Ver. 131, 132. And we have Examples of it in Scripture, *Gen.* xlvii. 29, 30. *Nehem.* ii. 3, 5. as the contrary was accounted a Curse, *1 Kings* xiii. 22.

And he judged Israel Twenty Years.] This was said before, xv. 20. and here mentioned again to shew that he continued to judge *Israel* (that is to vindicate them from their Oppressors, for we read of no other Act of a Judge) till he died. When he did as great an Act, as any he had done all the Time of his Judicature (or rather greater) for the humbling of the *Philistines*, who domineered over the *Israelites*, and restoring them to their Liberty: Which though he could not effect, yet he did so much towards it, by the many Mischiefs he did them, that not many Years after his Death, they had the Courage to betake themselves to their Arms, and fight the *Philistines*; whom they overthrew, and subdued, so that they came no more to molest the *Israelites* all the Days of *Samuel*; under whose Government, as I observed before, they recovered their Liberty from the long Oppression of this People, *1 Sam.* vii. 10, 13.

CHAP. XVII.

HERE begins the Second Part of this Book; which gives an Account of several memorable Transactions, in or about the Time of the Judges: Whose History the Author would not interrupt by intermixing these Matters with it; but reserved them to be related apart by themselves, in the five follow-

ing Chapters: Wherein he first gives an Account how Idolatry crept into the Tribe of *Ephraim*; which he doth in this Chapter: And then, Secondly, How it was propagated among the *Danites*, in an Expedition they made, wherein they sacked *Laiish*, Chap. xviii. And then, Thirdly, He relates a most foul Adultery committed in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, Chap. xix. After which follows the Destruction of that Tribe; for countenancing that Fact, Chap. xx. And Lastly, The Restauration of it, Chap. xxi.

Ver. 1. *AND there was a Man of Mount Ephraim, whose Name was Micah.*] When this Man lived, and did what follows, we may with some Certainty gather from Ver. 6. which tells us, there was no King in *Israel* at this Time; that is, no supreme Governor, with a Power to keep the People to their Duty. Which Anarchy happened (as *Primate Usher* and other great Men observe) between the Death of those Elders, who survived *Joshua*, and the first Oppression of *Israel* by *Cushan*: In which Space of Time, it is manifest, the *Israelites* first fell from the Worship of God, and polluted themselves with Idolatry, ii. 13. iii. 7. where we read the *Children of Israel* forsook the LORD, and did Evil in his Sight, i. e. committed Idolatry: The Beginning of which Defection from God, is described briefly in this Chapter.

Ver. 2. *And he said unto his Mother.*] Who seems to have been a rich Widow, that lived with her Son *Micah*.

The Eleven Hundred Shekels of Silver.] There is no mention of *Shekels* in the *Hebrew*; but our Interpreters followed the Rule I mentioned, that where *Pieces of Silver*, or *Silverlings*, are spoken of, the Meaning is *Shekels*.

That were taken from thee.] Of which she was robbed: Or, as the *Vulgar* understands it, which she had separated, or set apart; that is, devoted and consecrated to an holy Use, but some body had stolen and perverted to their own Use.

About which thou cursedst.] Adjured all her Family to discover the Money; with some sort of Curse upon them, if they knew where it was, and concealed it. See Dr. *Hammond* upon St. *Matth.* xxvi. Annot. 1.

And spakest of also in my Ears.] He was present, when she made this solemn Adjuration.

Behold, the Silver is with me, I took it.] He confessed the Truth, for fear the Curse should light upon him.

And his Mother said, Blessed be thou of the LORD, my Son.] She prayed the Curse might be turned into a Blessing upon him, for his ingenuous Confession.

Ver. 3. *And when he had restored the Eleven Hundred Shekels of Silver to his Mother, his Mother said, I had wholly dedicated the Silver unto the LORD.*] This, some think, is the Meaning of her cursing before mentioned. She confirmed, with an Oath, the Consecration of the Money to God, after the Manner of those, who vowed any thing unto him, *Levit.* xxvii. 28.

From

From my Hand.] Resolving not to keep it for my own Use: Or, thou shalt have it as a Gift from me.

For my Son to make a graven Image, and a molten Image.] For the Convenience of *Micab* and his Family; that he might make some Resemblance of God, whereby to worship him at home, without the Trouble of going, upon all Occasions, to the Tabernacle of *Shiloh*. For it appears by the Name *Jehovah*, to whom she consecrated the Silver, that she did not intend to forsake the LORD God of *Israel*, but only to worship him by an Image; unto which the *Israelites* had very early inclined, (*Exod.* xxxii.) and afterward generally relapsed into it in the Days of *Jeroboam*.

Some are of Opinion that her Meaning was, her Son might make either a graven or a molten Image, which he pleased; but it is manifest he made both, from xviii. 18. where they are evidently mentioned as distinct. But that these were a Representation of the two *Cherubims*, which covered the Ark, I dare not affirm; for they being of different Kinds, one a graven, the other a molten Image, seems to import the contrary; for the *Cherubims* were both alike. But see our most learned Dr. *Spencer*, L. 3. Cap. 3. Differt. 7. Sect. 4.

Now therefore I will restore it unto thee.] She resolved to return it into his Hands, for the Use before named.

Ver. 4. *Yet he restored the Money to his Mother.]* These Words seem to signify, that at the first he only brought the Money to her, offering to restore it; but she bid him keep it; which he refused to do; but would have her take it again into her Hands, which she did.

And his Mother took two hundred Shekels of Silver.] Some think she reserved the rest for her own private Use, contrary to her Vow: But it is more probable, that she gave them to her Son, to make the *Ephod* and *Teraphim*, and other Things belonging to that divine Service, which they intended to set up in their House.

And gave them to the Founder, who made thereof a graven Image, and a molten Image.] It is not certain whether this Silver was melted, and then the Images made of it; or that for this Sum of Money, the Founder sold these Images to him, made perhaps of Brass, silvered over. And this is most probable, because they would have been very small, if they had been made only of two hundred Shekels of Silver.

And they were in the House of Micab.] Placed in some Room of his House, where he intended to worship, as it follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 5. *And the Man Micab.]* This seems to import, that hereupon he looked upon himself, and was accounted a very considerable Person.

Had an House of Gods.] The Hebrew Words *Beth Elohim* may well be translated *an House of God*; as *Peter Martyr* here understands it. And so the Phrase is used in other Places, *Gen.* xxviii. 22. and in the next Chapter of this Book, Ver. 31. For his Intention was to make an Imitation of the House of God at *Shiloh* at his

own home; which may also be truly called *an House of Gods*, (as we translate it) because, whatsoever his Intention was, to worship God by Images, was accounted by him the Worshipping of other Gods.

And made an Ephod.] That the divine Service of his House might be performed with a greater Resemblance of what was done at the Tabernacle of *Shiloh*, he made Priestly Garments, as *Peter Martyr* understands it: Who takes the *Ephod* to comprehend not only the Breast-Plate adjoining to it, but the rest of the Vestments used by the High Priest; for he intended, it appears by the next Words, to set up an Oracle in his own House. But whatsoever Resemblance this *Ephod* had in its Shape and Form to the *Ephod* of the High Priest, it had none of that rich Work in it which the High Priest's *Ephod* had, nor no Girdle or Breast-Plate belonging to it; being no more such a Garment as that Golden *Ephod*, than his *Levite* was a Priest; or his *Teraphim*, an *Urim* and *Thummim*.

And Teraphim.] Of this Word I have said enough, upon *Gen.* xxxi. 19. where I have shewn, they were Images whereby the Eastern People consulted God, and hoped to receive Answers from him. And therefore I take *Micab's* Meaning to have been, to set up an Holy Oracle in his House, where the Priest wearing an *Ephod*, and other sacred Habiliments, should consult God by these *Teraphim*. But, as Mr. *Selden* well observes, (in his *Syntagma*, 1 de *Diis Syris*, Cap. 2.) the Worship of the true God, and of Idols, were here blended together by him. For the *Ephod* and the *Levite* (whom he afterward provided) were intended, no doubt, for the Service of the true God; but the graven and molten Image, and the *Teraphim*, belonging unto Dæmons, (as he speaks) by which the Children of *Dan*, in the next Chapter, desire the *Levite* to enquire of God for them; for they neither trusted to the *Ephod* alone, which related to God, nor to their *Teraphim* alone, which were an Invention of their own; but thought it necessary to join both together in divine Worship. And thus began Idolatry in *Israel*, by the Superstition of an old Woman, who puts this into her Son's Head. Many of the *Jews* fancy she was *Delilah*; who having got so much Money of every one of the Lords of the *Philistines*, thought it was fit to employ some of it to express her Devotion. But this is an idle Conceit, which hath no Ground, but only her being named in the foregoing Chapter; which relates an History of Things long after *Micab's* Time.

And consecrated one of his Sons, who became his Priest.] In the Hebrew it is, filled the Hand of one of his Sons; that is, as many think, the eldest Son of his Family, into whose Hands he put Sacrifices to be offered unto God? For that was the Rite of initiating Priests, as we find *Exod.* xxxi. 24. *Levit.* viii. 27.

Ver. 6. *In those Days there was no King in Israel.]* That is, this was before the Time of the *Judges*, when these Things fell out; in whom there was a Sovereign Power to correct Abuses, and especially to suppress Idolatry;

latry; which Power being now wanting, it was the Reason *Micah* took upon him to make himself a private Temple in his own House; because the Ways (as *Grotius* conjectures) were dangerous when there was no supreme Governor, being infested with Thieves, or not kept in good Repair, which made Travellers uneasy. This last is more probable than that Robbers infested the Country; for it was now a Time of Peace, when the *Levite* travelled from one Part of the Land to the other securely enough; and the *Danites* sent Spies a long way to search out the Country of *Laiſh* without Danger; and afterwards marched with a great Body to seek a new Settlement; which, one would think, should rather have been employed in clearing their Country where they were, from such pestilent Cut-throats, as some suppose to have infested it.

As for the Name of *King*, it was given to the *Judges*; just as it was to *Moses*, who was their supreme Governor; but was not properly a *King*, as *Hermannus Conringius* observes, in his Book *de Rep. Hebr. Sect. 49. &c.*

But every Man did that which was right in his own Eyes.] And there can be no worse State of Things (as *Peter Martyr* here observes) than for every one to be left unto his own Will and Pleasure; as they were now, when they left the LORD their GOD: For being without the true GOD, they were also without a teaching Priest, and without Law, as the Prophet *Azariah* his Words are, 2 *Chron. xv. 3.* where he seems, in that and the following Verses, to describe the lamentable State of Things in these Times, after the Death of *Joshua*, and the Elders that out-lived him, to the Days of *Samuel*.

Ver. 7. And there was a young Man came out of *Bethlehem-Judab*.] There was another *Bethlehem* in the Tribe of *Zebulun*, *Josh. xix. 15.* and therefore this is called *Bethlehem-Judab*, to distinguish it from that.

Of the Family of *Judab*, who was a *Levite*.] By his Mother's Side he was of the Tribe of *Judab*. Which is the most easy Explication, notwithstanding what *Kimchi* saith to shew that Genealogies are not derived from the Mother. For here is no Account of his Genealogy, which is mentioned afterward, *xviii. 30.* from his Father; but it is noted that his Mother was of the Tribe of *Judab*, to shew how he came to live at *Bethlehem*, which was no *Levitical* City.

And he sojourned there.] Lived there as a Stranger, (for so the Word *Gour* signifies in the next Verse) not as a Citizen, and Inhabitant of the Place.

Ver. 8. And the Man departed out of the City from *Bethlehem-Judab*, to sojourn where he could find a Place.] By this it appears he was a kind of Vagabond, who rambled about from Place to Place to find a Subsistence; for though there was sufficient Provision made for the *Levites*, by the Tythes of the Land; yet we may well think they were not duly paid in a Time of such Confusion, that every Man did what he list; there being no Judge to see them do their Duty.

And he came to *Mount Ephraim*, to the House of *Micah*, as he sojourned.] As he travelled about the Country, he came hither, to beg an Alms perhaps, or, at best, to seek for some Employment.

Ver. 9. And *Micah* said unto him, Whence comest thou? He examined him, as the Manner was, unto what Country he belonged, and what was his Business.

And he said unto him, I am a *Levite* of *Bethlehem-Judab*, and I go to sojourn where I may find a Place.] He was looking out for a Maintenance somewhere or other, to support him in his necessitous Condition.

Ver. 10. And *Micah* said unto him, Dwell with me.] He desires him to seek no further, but stay there, and settle with him in his House.

And be unto me a Father and a Priest.] The Prophets, and other great Men, were called anciently by the Name of *Father*, as *Elisha* calls *Elijah*, 2 *Kings ii. 12.* and the King of *Israel* calls *Elisha*, 2 *Kings vi. 21.* and the King of *Syria* is represented as speaking to him in the same Language, 2 *Kings viii. 9.* and King *Joash*, *xiii. 14.* Therefore *Micah's* Meaning is, he would make him the Director and Governor of his Family, and reverence him accordingly, if he would undertake to perform all sacred Offices among them.

And I will give thee ten *Shekels* of Silver by the Year.] Next to Honour, he promises him Money, and all Things needful for his Support.

And a Suit of Apparel.] Or, as it is in the Margin, a double Suit. For so the *LXX* and the *Vulgar*, ζεύγος ἱματίων, a Couple of Garments. And there being something of Order signified in the Word *Herech*, which we translate *Suit*, many understand hereby a Winter and a Summer Suit of Clothes: And *de Dieu* hath justified this Interpretation of a double Garment out of the *Ethiopic* Language, where this Word signifies a Companion; whence it may be probably concluded, that here is intended not one Suit only, but two at least. With whom agrees *Hottinger* in his *Smegma Orientale*, Cap. 5. P. 88. where he observes, that all, in a Manner, are of Opinion, that more Suits of Apparel than one are signified by this Word; but whence to fetch that Signification is not to be found, but in the *Ethiopic* Language, where it signifies a Companion, a Friend, another Self, as his Words are.

And thy *Victuals*.] His constant Diet at his Table.

And the *Levite* went in.] Accepted of his Offer, so far as to go into his House, and see how he liked every thing.

Ver. 11. And the *Levite* was content to dwell with the Man.] After some time he resolved to settle in his House.

And the young Man was unto him as one of his Sons.] He treated him with such Affection, that he was the more willing to stay there.

Ver. 12. And *Micah* consecrated the *Levite*, and the young Man became his Priest.] A wonderful Presumption in them both; *Micah* having no Authority to consecrate, nor the *Levite* (who

(who was not of Aaron's Family) being capable of the Priestly Office. But such was the Confusion of those Times, for want of a Judge, that Micah's Superstition had no Check upon it; and the Levite's Poverty and Ambition tempted him to accept of the Preferment proffered to him: His Youth also made him the more ignorant.

And was in the House of Micah.] Continued with him to execute the Priest's Office.

Ver. 13. *Then said Micah, Now I know that the LORD will do me good, because I have a Levite for my Priest.]* Who he thought had more Right to the Office, and would be more acceptable to God, than his own Son, whom he had consecrated before, ver. 5.

By this it is evident, that he did not intend to forsake the LORD; but his Mind was so blinded, that he took one small Benefit for a sufficient Sign of his Favour, when he was guilty of so many heinous Offences against the Divine Majesty: First, in making Idols, and then in making one of his Sons a Priest; and after that, in drawing a poor young Man into the same Crime with him; and in taking upon him to consecrate a base Levite to be a Priest; of which Office he was not capable, if he had had Power to consecrate one, which he had not. But both of them were Intruders into that which belonged not to them; and thereby drew upon themselves a Curse; rather than a Blessing.

C H A P. XVIII.

Ver. 1. **I***N those Days there was no King in Israel.]* These Words seem to be repeated, to suggest the Reason of such enormous Practices, as are before mentioned; and here follow in this Chapter.

And in those Days.] When there was no Judge in Israel. That is, saith the Author of *Tzemach David*, in the Interval between the Government of *Jair* and *Jephthah*. Which is an idle Opinion; and yet he saith he should be of it, did he not reverence his Masters who are of another mind; which is the truer: That *these Days* were before there was a Judge in Israel, between the Death of *Joshua* and the Elders that survived him; and the Time of *Othniel*, who was the first Judge that God raised up unto them. So *Josephus*, Lib. 5. *Antiq.* Cap. 2.

The Tribe of the Danites.] Or rather, a Tribe, &c. For so the Word *Schebet* is sometimes used for a Family in a Tribe; as in the 20th Chapter of this Book, ver. 12. it is said; the Tribes of Israel sent Messengers to all the Tribes of Benjamin, i. e. to all the Families of the Tribe of Benjamin; and in *Isa.* xix. 13. *De Dieu* observes the same: Who also truly notes; that when the whole Tribe is spoken of, it is not said *Schebet hadani*, as it is here, but *Schebet Dan*. Therefore *hadani* here, and in other Places, signifies a Family derived from that Tribe.

Sought them an Inheritance to dwell in.] Some of that Tribe which was very much straitned

by the old Inhabitants of the Land (who pent them up in a narrow Compass, which was not sufficient for them) enquired where they might find a commodious Settlement in some other Place.

For unto that Day all their Inheritance had not fallen unto them among the Tribes of Israel.] They had an Inheritance allotted them, as well as the rest of the Tribes, *Josh.* xix. 40, &c. but by their Sloth, and for want of that brotherly Assistance which other Tribes should have afforded them; they could not get Possession of a considerable Part of it; but were forced by the Amorites to content themselves with the mountainous Part of their Country; leaving them none of the Champaign, (as *Josephus* observes) nor all the Mountains neither. See the 1st Chapter of this Book, ver. 34, 35. Wanting room therefore for all their People and Cattle, and being unable to deal with the Amorites; they sent some, as it here follows, to seek for a Dwelling somewhere else.

Ver. 2. *And the Children of Dan sent of their Family five Men from their Coasts.]* It is no improbable Conjecture of *Arias Montanus*, that there were five Families of the Danites; out of each of which one Man was chosen to make the following Discovery.

Men of Valour.] Who could not be daunted if they were taken for Spies. Some think also Men of Quality; such as those whom *Moses* sent to spy out the Land of Canaan.

From Zorah and from Eshtaol.] Which Places are the first named in the Account of the Lot of their Inheritance, *Josh.* xix. 41.

To spy out the Land.] They were sent *εἰς μετόπισθον*, (as *Josephus* speaks) into the Midland Country, (for the Danites were seated near the Philistines towards the Sea-Coast) to see if they could find out a convenient Place for them.

And to search it.] To enquire into the Condition of it, and of the Inhabitants.

And they said unto them, Go, search the Land.] They had a Commission from their Elders to go whither they directed them, in the plain Country wherein *Lais* stood, ver. 14.

And when they came to Mount Ephraim.] These two Tribes joined, as I observed upon i. 35.

To the House of Micah.] To the Place where his House stood.

They lodged there.] Not in Micah's House; but in some Place of Mount Ephraim, not far from it; as we may guess by the next Verse.

Ver. 3. *And when they were by the House of Micah.]* Near to which; it is probable, there was a publick Inn, for the Entertainment of such as came from the neighbouring Parts to worship, or to ask Counsel of the Oracle at Micah's House.

They knew the Voice of the young Man, the Levite.] Having been acquainted with him heretofore, when, it is probable, he was in their Country; for he had led a wandering Life.

And they turned in thither.] Went into Micah's House, at his Invitation, or to salute him; and enquire of his Welfare.

And said unto him, Who brought thee hither?] Far from that City of the Levites, I suppose, to which he belonged.

And what makest thou here?] What Business hast thou in this Place?

And what hast thou here?] How dost thou live and maintain thyself? For they knew he had been poor.

Ver. 4. *And he said unto them, Thus and thus dealeth Micah with me, and hath hired me, and I am his Priest.]* He told them the Agreement between Micah and him, mentioned in the foregoing Chapter.

Ver. 5. *And they said unto him, Ask Counsel, we pray thee, of God, that we may know whether our Way we go shall be prosperous.]* They were as ignorant, it seems, as he; and thought God would give an Answer there, as well as at his own House.

Ver. 6. *And the Priest said unto them, Go in Peace.]* Whether he had any Answer from the *Teraphim*, or feigned it out of his own Head, is not certain; but he encouraged them to proceed in their Design.

Before the LORD is your Way, wherein you go.] He pretended to have this Answer from the LORD, who, he assures them, would direct, guide, and protect them in their Proceedings; for that is the Meaning of their Way *before the LORD*: Under his Eye; that is, his Care and Providence, who would dispose all Things for their good Success. Now if the Levite did not devise this Answer, which he thought would please them, but heard a real Voice from the *Teraphim*, which promised them Prosperity, then it was permitted by God, to serve the Ends of his Providence, just as *Nebuchadnezzar* was encouraged by his Diviners, to undertake the Siege of *Jerusalem*, Ezek. xxi. 21, 22.

Ver. 7. *Then the Five Men departed, and came to Laish.]* Called *Leshem* in *Josh. xix. 47.* where this Story is briefly told, by way of Anticipation: See my Notes there. It was a City which lay at the Foot of *Libanus*, near the Fountain of *Jordan*, as *Josephus* saith in the Place above named.

And saw the People that were therein, how they dwelt careless, after the Manner of the Zidonians.] Had no Fear of any Enemy, no more than the *Zidonians*, who were a powerful People, in a strong City; whose Customs, I suppose, they imitated.

Quiet and secure.] Because they knew nobody of whom they had any Fear.

And there was no Magistrate in the Land, that put them to shame in any thing.] To punish them for any thing they did, which made them live as they pleased. There are very various Interpretations of these Words, of which *De Dieu* hath given the best Account.

And they were far from the Zidonians.] Who might have otherwise come to their Assistance, upon any sudden Invasion, they following the Manners and Customs of that People; but they were a Day's Journey from them, as *Josephus* there saith.

And had no Business with any Man.] No Traffick or Commerce with any of their Neigh-

bours, nor they with them. This Disposition laid them open to be a Prey to any resolute Invader.

Ver. 8. *And they came unto their Brethren in Zorah and Eshtaol.]* From whence they were sent, ver. 2.

And their Brethren said unto them, What say ye?] They asked them what Account they brought of their Journey.

Ver. 9. *And they said, Arise, that we may go up against them.]* This shews, that they were particularly directed to make a Discovery of *Laish*.

For we have seen the Land, and behold, it is very good.] Ἰν ἀγαθὴν καὶ πλούσιον, as *Josephus* expresses it, a goodly Country, and very fertile.

And are ye still?] Their Brethren did not seem at first to believe them, which makes them stir them up by this Question, and the following Exhortation.

Be not slothful to go, and to enter to possess the Land.] They speak as if they had no more to do, but to march thither, and take possession of the Country.

Ver. 10. *When ye go, ye shall come unto a People secure, and to a large Land.]* They use two Arguments to excite them to the Enterprize; that it was easy, and would be very advantageous.

And God hath given it into your Hand.] They add the Encouragement the Priest had given them, ver. 6. which was the greatest of all.

A Place where there is no Want of any thing that is in the Earth.] This magnifies the Goodness of God to them, in discovering a Country to them abounding with all manner of good things, which they very much wanted in the Mountains wherein they were pent up. See ver. 1.

Ver. 11. *And there went from thence of the Family of the Danites, out of Zorah and Eshtaol.]* Either Family is here put for a Tribe, or the Singular Number for the Plural; there going out of some of the Families of the *Danites*, the following Number.

Six hundred Men, appointed with Weapons of War.] Carrying their Wives, and Children, and Household-Stuff with them; for they nothing doubted of making a Settlement there. See ver. 21.

Ver. 12. *And they went up and pitched in Kirjath-jearim, in Judah.]* Not in the City itself, but in the Fields belonging to it, as appears from the last Words of this Verse. See concerning this Place *Josh. xv. 9, 60.* which lay in the North Part of the Tribe of *Judah*, and so lay in the Road to *Laish*.

Wherefore they called the Place Mahaneh-Dan, unto this Day.] See xiii. ult.

Behold, it is behind Kirjath-jearim.] On the West of it, towards the *Mediterranean Sea*, which is called the *Hindermost Sea*, *Deut. xi. 24.* as on the contrary, the East is called *Kedem*, which imports as much as *before*. Here the *Danites* encamped the first Night after they came from *Zorah* and *Eshtaol*.

Ver. 13. *And they passed thence unto Mount Ephraim.]* The second Day's March was to this Place, still more Northward.

And

And they came to the House of Micah.] Unto the Town or Village where *Micah* lived ; for they did not yet come to his House, but afterward, *ver. 15.*

Ver. 14. Then answered the five Men that went to spy out the Country of Laish.] In the Hebrew Language he is said oft-times to answer, who speaks first, as in *1 Kings i. 28.* and many other Places.

And said unto their Brethren.] Who knew, perhaps, that they called at this Place by the way, and asked them, who dwelt there ?

Do ye know that there is in these Houses.] *i. e.* In that Town or Village, *viz.* in *Micah's* House, which was the chief in the Town. See *ver. 12.*

An Ephod and Teraphim, and a Graven Image, and a Molten Image ?] Which the *Levite* had shewn them, or told them were in the House.

Now therefore consider what ye have to do.] Whether it might not be expedient to carry those sacred Things along with them, which they fancied would be an Assurance of the divine Presence with them : For from thence they had received an Answer of Peace, when they went to spy the Country whither they were now going, *ver. 6.*

Ver. 15. And they turned thitherward, and came to the House of the young Man the Levite, even unto the House of Micah.] To that Part of the House where the *Levite* had his Apartment, not to the sacred Place where the fore-named Idols were.

And saluted him.] Or, asked him of his Health and Welfare, as the Hebrew Phrase signifies, *Asked him of Peace.*

Ver. 16. And the Six hundred Men appointed, with their Weapons of War, which were of the Children of Dan, stood by the Entering of the Gate.] Whither the Five Men brought the *Levite* out to them, or he, hearing there was such a Company there, came out to view them, after the Salutation was over.

Ver. 17. And the Five Men that went to spy out the Land, went up, and came in thither.] Having brought him out, they returned back to the Place where they knew the Images, &c. were.

And took the Graven Image, and the Ephod, and the Teraphim, and the Molten Image ; and the Priest stood in the Entering of the Gate with the Six hundred Men, &c.] That is, while the *Levite* was discoursing with them, and wishing them, perhaps, good Success, they robbed the Chapel, and took away all the Furniture of it. Some think *Micah* also was with him at the Gate, entertaining them with Meat and Drink. But that is confuted by what follows.

Ver. 18. And these went into Micah's House, and fetched the carved Image, the Ephod, and the Teraphim, and the Molten Image.] They not only took them, as is said before, but brought them out openly before the *Levite's* Eyes, who saw them in their Hands, and thereupon expostulated with them.

Then said the Priest unto them, What do ye ?] Will you be guilty of such a Sacrilege ; Or, will you thus requite me, who have been very kind to you ?

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Ver. 19. And they said unto him, Hold thy peace, lay thine Hand upon thy Mouth.] Keep Silence, and make no Noise. So this Phrase is used thrice in the Book of *Job* (*xxi. 5. xxix. 9. xxxix. 37.*) and in the Book of *Proverbs*, *xxx. 32.* and the Prophet *Micah*, *vii. 16.*

And go with us, and be unto us a Father and a Priest.] They invite him to serve them in the same Quality as he did *Micah*, promising him the same Authority, Reverence, and Affection, that he had from him : And moreover, they represent to him, in the next Words, how much more advantageous it would be to minister unto so great a Part of a Tribe, than to one private Person.

Is it better for thee to be a Priest unto the House of one Man, or that thou be a Priest unto a Tribe, and a Family in Israel ?] They were not a Tribe, but only a Part of it ; yet so considerable a Part being a great Family, they are called a *Tribe, and a Family* ; that is, a whole Family in that Tribe.

Ver. 20. And the Priest's Heart was glad.] To think he should so very much mend his Condition ; for the same Arguments which prevailed with him to dwell with *Micah*, were far stronger now (*viz.* Covetousness and Ambition) to move him to go along with them.

And he took the Ephod, and the Teraphim, and the Graven Image.] Under which is comprehended also, the Molten Image, which the Five Men brought out of the House with the other, *ver. 17, 18.*

And went in the midst of the People.] Who undertook to guard him from any Assault that might be made on any Side, to bring him back : Or, he went perhaps, with those sacred Things (as they accounted them) in the midst of the People, in imitation of the Ark, which was so placed when the Camp of *Israel* marched, *Numb. x. 21.*

Ver. 21. And so they turned and departed.] From his House.

And put the Little-ones, and the Cattle, and the Carriage, before them.] Both for Safety, if any should pursue them, and that they might march no faster than they were able to bear it.

Ver. 22. And when they were a good way from the House of Micah.] Who did not immediately miss the *Levite*, and his Idols, and spent some Time in assembling his Neighbours.

The Men that were in the Houses near to Micah's House.] If there was not a Town there before, it is likely, the Place of Worship which *Micah* set up, made many resort thither, and settle their Habitation there.

Gathered together, and overtook the Children of Dan.] Hoping to recover what they had taken away.

Ver. 23. And they cried to the Children of Dan.] Desiring them to stop their March, till they had spoken with them.

And they turned their Faces, and said unto Micah, What aileth thee, that thou comest with such a Company ?] Accordingly they made a Stand, and faced about, asking him, what he would have, and what he meant to bring a little Army with him, as if he intended an Assault.

Y 2

Ver.

Ver. 24. *And he said, Ye have taken away my Gods which I made, and the Priest, and ye are gone away.]* By Gods he means the Symbols of the divine Presence ; for he was not so foolish as to believe, that he could make his God, he being a Worshipper of *Jehovah*, xvii. 3, 13.

And what have I more ? and what is this that ye say unto me, What aileth thee ?] He thought it a strange Question to ask what he ailed, when they had taken away that which he valued above all Things in the World.

Ver. 25. *And the Children of Dan said unto him, Let not thy Voice be heard among us.]* They that were next to him, advised him not to say a Word more, lest, if the whole Army should hear his Reproaches, mischief might follow.

Lest angry Fellows run upon thee, and thou lose thy Life, and the Life of thy Household.] There are always such fierce and furious Men among Soldiers, who are incensed to bloody Executions upon the least Provocation ; and these being Men going to make their Fortune (as we speak) it is likely were generally of such a violent Temper.

Ver. 26. *And the Children of Dan went their way.]* Turned about again, and pursued their March, with Neglect and Scorn of *Micah*.

And when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back to his House.] His Zeal was not so great for his Gods, but he loved his Life better.

Ver. 27. *And they took the Things which Micah had made, and the Priest which he had.]* i. e. They kept them, and carried them along with them.

And came unto Laish.] They seem to have made three Days March in this Expedition, encamping first at *Kirjath-jearim*, and the next Night at *Micah's* House, and coming the next Day to *Laish*.

Unto a People that were at quiet and secure.] Whom they found in the Posture the Spies had described them, ver. 10. having no Scouts abroad, to bring them Notice of any approaching Danger, nor any Guards of the Passes to their City, or at its Gates ; so that they were easily surprized.

And they smote them with the Edge of the Sword, and burnt the City with Fire.] Killed the People of the Country and City, unto which they set fire, when they had taken, I suppose, the Spoil of it. Thus was fulfilled the Prophecy of *Moses* concerning this Tribe, *Deut.* xxxiii. 22. See there.

Ver. 28. *And there was no Deliverer, because it was far from Zidon.]* See ver. 7.

And they had no Business with any Man.] Which deprived them of all Intelligence.

And it was in the Valley that lieth by Beth-rehob.] A City near to *Hamath*, in the most northerly Part of the Country. See *Numb.* xiii. 21.

And they built a City, and dwelt therein.] Larger, perhaps, than the former ; which being not big enough to contain them, they thought fit to burn it, and build a better.

Ver. 29. *And they called the Name of the City Dan, after the Name of their Father Dan, who was born unto Israel.]* They gave it this Name,

that it might be remembered they belonged to the People of *Israel*, tho' they lived at a great distance from their own Tribe, in the very Extremity of the North of *Judæa*, (whereas the Tribe of *Dan* had their Lot in the South-West) from whence came the common Saying afterwards, when they would express the whole Length of the Country, *From Dan to Beer-sheba*.

Howbeit the Name of the City was Laish at the first.] This seems to signify, that they did not burn the whole City, but so much as might strike a Terror into the Inhabitants, and make their Conquest more easy ; for he speaks of it as still the same City, tho' it lost its old Name.

Ver. 30. *And the Children of Dan set up the Graven Image.]* Together with the Molten, no doubt, and made use of the *Ephod* and *Tera-phim* here, as *Micah* had done in his House, fancying, I suppose, it was by a Divine Direction from this Oracle, that the five Men had such good Success, when they went to spy out this Land, ver. 5, 6.

And Jonathan.] This was the Name of the Levite who came along with them.

The Son of Gershon, the Son of Manasseh.] So not only the *Hebrew*, but the *Chaldee*, and the *LXX.* (both in the *Roman* Edition, and in that of *Basil*, and in the *Palatine MS.* as *Hottinger* observes) which will not let us doubt it is the true Reading : Tho' the *Vulgar* hath put *Moses* instead of *Manasseh*, according to an idle Conceit of some of the *Rabbins*, who say, the Letter *Nun*, in the middle of the Word, is not written even with the rest, but suspended above the rest of the Letters, to shew, that tho' he was indeed the Son of *Moses*, yet he should rather be called the Son of *Manasseh*, because he did the Works of *Manasseh*, and not of *Moses* ; that is, was an Idolater. So *Kimchi* (as the same *Hottinger* observes) who therein follows the *Talmudists* in *Bava Bathra*. See his *Thesaurus Philologicus*, L. 1. Cap. 2. Quæst. 4. And *Bartoloccius*, in his *Kirjath-Sepher*, Tom. 1. P. 114. And thus they made this *Jonathan* to be the Grandchild of *Moses*, for *Gershon* was his Son : But it is not likely he would have been left in so poor a Condition, if he had been so nearly related to their great Law-giver ; nor would he have had so ill an Education. And, being now but a Youth, it is not probable that he was the Son of that *Gershon*, but of some other, who had the Name of his famous Ancestor given him, tho' his Father's Name was *Manasseh* : But it is wholly uncertain from what Family of the *Levites* this Man was derived ; and these Names, no doubt, were common to more than those who first bare them.

He and his Sons were Priests of the Tribe of Dan.] Of that Part of the Tribe who settled here at *Laish*.

Until the Day of the Captivity of the Land.] Some Cavillers have endeavoured to frame an Argument from hence, that this Book was written in later Times, after the *Ten Tribes* were carried away by *Salmanasser* ; or, as some of the *Jews* in *Seder Olam* interpret the *Captivity of the Land*, to signify that by *Nebuchadnezzar* :

chadnezzar : But *Kimchi* and *Ralbag* very well object against this, that it is altogether unlikely these Images should have been suffered to continue in the Days of *David* ; who was a Man after God's own Heart, and set himself to advance true Religion to the utmost of his power, all the Country over, from *Dan* to *Beersheba* : Therefore *Kimchi*, with great reason, concludes, That by *the Captivity of the Land* is meant the taking of the Ark by the *Philistines*, and carrying it Captive into the Temple of *Dagon* : Which is confirmed, as our famous *Selden* observes (*Syntag. i. de Diis Syris*, Cap. 2.) by the next Verse, which saith, That till *Shiloh* was destroyed, these Images remained. And this taking of the Ark the *Psalmist* expressly calls a *Captivity*, when he saith *Psal. lxxviii. 60, 61. He forsook the Tabernacle of Shiloh, &c. and delivered his Strength into Captivity, his Glory into the Enemy's hand.* As for the Interpretation of *Ralbag*, who takes this Captivity to have been in the Days of *Jabin* King of *Canaan*, it is not worth confuting.

Ver. 31. *And they set up Micah's graven Image which he made, all the Time that the House of God was in Shiloh.* Which was all the Time of the Judges mentioned in this Book ; who, tho' zealous Reformers, could not, it seems, extend their Authority to the very Skirts of the Country, where Idolatry still lurked in this Corner of the Land : For scarce any one of the Judges ruled over the whole Country of *Israel* ; but only over such Tribes as they delivered from imminent Danger. This appears by the Armies which *Barak* and *Gideon* raised ; and in the double Oppression they lay under, at the same time, in the West and in the East, by the *Philistines* and the *Ammonites* ; when *Jephthah* was raised up against the latter, and *Samson* against the former : No wonder therefore that none of them could make a general Reformation, nor abolish the Idolatry in this Place : But God used the *Philistines* as Instruments to put an end to it ; for when they destroyed *Shiloh*, where the true House of God was, they destroyed *this House of Gods* (as they esteemed it. See xvii. 5.) being a Resemblance of it : And perhaps, as they brought the Ark into the Field against the *Philistines*, so the *Danites* brought these Images, with the *Ephod* and *Teraphim*, and the Priest, who was slain with *Hophni* and *Phineas* ; or, as *Huetius* thinks, carried Captive into the Land of the *Philistines*, with a great many other *Israelites*. But this Place remained still so famous for the Resort of People thither to worship, that when *Jeroboam* set up his Golden Calves, he erected one of them here in *Dan*, as another in *Bethel* : Where there having been a real Appearance of God, in ancient Time, to *Jacob*, the People were easily made to believe there had been the like in *Dan*, in the Time here mentioned.

C H A P. XIX.

Ver. 1. **A**ND it came to pass in those Days, when there was no King in *Israel*.] In the Time before mentioned, xvii. 6. xviii. 1. See there.

That there was a certain Levite sojourning on the Side of Mount *Ephraim*.] He seems to have been a Stranger in this Country, as the other *Levite* was, who sojourned in the Land of *Judah*, xvii. 7.

And he took him a Concubine out of *Bethlehem-Judah*.] That is, a Wife of the secondary Sort, without such solemn Espousals, or a Dowry, as those called *Wives* had. So the *Talmudists* generally think. But *Aberbinel*, following *Rashi*, thinks, that a *Concubine* was taken with Espousals, and only wanted a Dowry, or a Jointure (as we speak.) Certain it is, such Persons were really *Wives* ; and it was Adultery in any other Person that lay with them, but he who had married them. As this Man had this Woman, for he is expressly called her Husband in the next Chapter, xx. 4. and her Father is called his Father-in-Law in this Chapter, ver. 47. See *Selden*, Lib. 5. *De Jure Nat. & Gent.* Cap. vii. and *Buxtorf de Sponsal. & Divortis*, pag. 11, &c. where the Opinion of *Abarbinel* is largely represented.

Ver. 2. *And his Concubine played the Whore against him.*] Was false to his Bed, into which she admitted some other Person.

And went away from him unto her Father's House in *Bethlehem-Judah*.] To escape the Punishment unto which she was liable as an Adulteress : But there are those who, by the Word *Tiznek*, which we translate *played the Whore*, will have no more to be meant, but that she was froward and contumaciously disobedient ; so that she could not endure his Company, but forsook him : The *Chaldee* plainly inclines this way ; and the *LXX* translate it *ὡργίσθη αὐτῷ*, *She carried herself like a Fury to him* ; and *Josephus ἀλλοτρίως ἔειχε*, *She behaved herself untowardly*.

And was there Four whole Months.] Or, as others take it, *A Year and Four Months*. For Days in Scripture frequently signify a Year : But the *LXX*, and *Josephus* take it for so many Days as made Four Months.

Ver. 3. *And her Husband arose, and went after her.*] His Anger was over by this time, and his Affection to her revived : Perhaps also he heard she repented, and was become a better Woman.

To speak friendly to her.] In the Hebrew, *To speak to her Heart* ; that is, to make her sensible of his Kindness to her, notwithstanding her Offence, and to assure her of his Pardon.

And to bring her again.] To his own Habitation, from whence she went away.

Having a Servant with him, and a Couple of Asses.] And for that end came attended with a Servant, to carry her and her Baggage (as we now speak) with necessary Provisions.

And she brought him into her Father's House.] She seems to have been as ready as he for a Reconciliation.

And when the Father of the Damsel saw him, he rejoiced to see him.] Embraced him with great Affection and Joy.

Ver. 4. *And his Father-in-Law, the Damsel's Father, retained him.*] Would not let him go away, as soon as he desired.

Ver.

Ver. 5. *And it came to pass on the Fourth Day, when they arose early in the Morning, that he rose up to depart.*] With an Intention to leave him, and return to his own House.

And the Damsel's Father said unto his Son-in-Law, Comfort thy Heart with a Morsel of Bread, and afterward go your Way.] Her Father had no mind to part with him so soon, hoping, by keeping him longer in his House, their Conjugal Love and Affection would be more confirmed: And devised this Way to detain him, by desiring him to take a short Repast with him, before he began his Journey; for this is meant by *a Morsel of Bread*, under which all sort of Provisions are comprehended: Where-with he desired him to comfort, or, as the Word literally signifies in the Hebrew, *support his Heart*; which in English we express exactly by, *stay his Stomach with a Morsel*, &c. For, in many Authors, the Heart signifies the Stomach, as several have observed, particularly Gataker in his Cinnus, Lib. 2. Cap. xvi.

Ver. 6. *And they sat down, and did eat and drink both of them together.*] He made him a great Feast, at which they sat a long time.

For the Damsel's Father had said unto the Man, Be content, I pray thee, and tarry all Night; and let thy Heart be merry.] For he was earnest with him not to think of going away that Day, but to spend it joyfully with him and with his Daughter.

Ver. 7. *And when the Man rose up to depart, his Father-in-Law urged him; therefore he lodged there again.*] He pressed his Stay so hard, that when he offered to be gone, he prevail'd with him to lodge there another Night.

Ver. 8. *And he arose early in the Morning on the Fifth Day to depart, and the Damsel's Father said unto him, Comfort thy Heart, I pray thee.*] Stay till after Dinner.

And they tarried till Afternoon, and they did eat both of them.] He prolonged the Entertainment, so that the Sun began to decline before they had done.

Ver. 9. *And when the Man rose up to depart, he and his Concubine, and his Servant.*] Who had made all ready for their Journey.

His Father-in-Law, the Damsel's Father, said unto him, Behold now the Day draweth towards Evening, I pray you tarry all Night; behold, the Day draweth to an End.] In the Hebrew the Words are, *It is the pitching Time of the Day*; that is, when Men pitch their Tents, to take their Rest.

Lodge here, that thine Heart may be merry.] He prays him that they may rejoice together one Night more.

And to-morrow get you early on your Way, that thou mayst go home.] He promises not to detain them longer than this Night, but to let them go away as early as they pleased next Morning, without any Entertainment.

Ver. 10. *But the Man would not tarry that Night.*] Suspecting his Father would use still the same kind Artifice, or some other, to keep him longer with him.

But he rose up and departed, and came over against Jebus, (which is Jerusalem) and there

were with him two Asses saddled, and his Concubine also was with him.] He carried away all that he brought, (ver. 3.) and his Wife also, whom he went to invite again to dwell with him.

Ver. 11. *And when they were by Jebus, the Day was far spent, and the Servant said unto his Master, Come, I pray thee, and let us turn in unto this City of the Jebusites, and lodge in it.*] The famous City Jerusalem (anciently called Jebus) had been taken by the Children of Judah, (i. 8.) but the Jebusites still kept the strong Fort of Sion, till the Time of David, and thereby so commanded the lower Town, that they forced the Children of Judah and Benjamin to let them dwell with them there, (i. 21. Josh. xv. ult.) and it appears by this Place, that they were the ruling Party, and therefore it is called *this City of the Jebusites*. See Josh. x. 1.

Ver. 12. *And his Master said unto him, We will not turn aside hither, into the City of a Stranger, that is not of the Children of Israel.*] This is an Argument that he was not like the other Levite, mentioned in the xviii Chapter; for he would not take up his Lodging among Idolaters: And it also shews, that the greater Part of the Inhabitants were Jebusites, and the Children of Israel had little or no Power there; yea, it is possible that this happened so long before the Days of the Judges, that Jerusalem was not yet taken by the Children of Judah.

We will pass over to Gibeah.] Which was possessed by the Children of Israel, viz. the Benjamites.

Ver. 13. *And he said unto his Servant, Come, and let us draw near to one of these Places, to lodge all Night, in Gibeah, or in Ramah.*] The Servant, I suppose, made some Objection against Gibeah, and therefore he put him to his Choice, either to go thither, or to Ramah; which was also a City belonging unto Benjamin, both of them lying Northward of Jerusalem, and not far from it.

Ver. 14. *And they passed on and went their Way, and the Sun went down upon them, when they were by Gibeah, which belongeth to Benjamin.*] This is noted, to distinguish it from another Gibeah which belonged to Judah, Josh. xv. 57.

Ver. 15. *And they turned aside thither, to go in, and to lodge in Gibeah.*] Being unable to reach Ramah, unless they would have travelled in the Night, which had not been safe.

And when he went in, he sat him down in a Street of the City.] There being, I suppose, no Publick Inn in the Town, unto which Strangers might resort.

For there was no Man that took them into his House to lodging.] They were grown so lewd in this Place, that there was no Humanity left among them; but the ancient Custom of Hospitality, in entertaining Strangers, was quite abolished: Or, if any had so much Goodness remaining as to be inclined to it, they durst not make any Invitation of a Stranger to their Houses, for fear of drawing Mischief upon themselves, from their debauched Neighbours.

Ver. 16.

Ver. 16. *And behold there came an old Man from his Work out of the Field at Evening.] Before it was quite dark, which was also of Mount Ephraim, where this Levite dwelt, and he sojourned in Gibeah. Being but a Sojourner himself, he had the more Compassion on a Stranger.*

But the Men of the Place were Benjamites.] This was one of the Cities given to the Priests, Josh. xxi. 17. But the Priests did not inhabit them alone, especially now when they were but few, and therefore let other Persons, who were not Priests, dwell there together with them.

Ver. 17. *And when he had lift up his Eyes, he saw a wayfaring Man in the Street of the City.] Who looked as if he was at a loss for a Lodging.*

And the old Man said, Whither goest thou? and whence comest thou?] These were the usual Questions made to Travellers.

Ver. 18. *And he said unto him, we are passing from Bethlehem-Judah, toward the Side of Mount Ephraim, from thence am I; and I went to Bethlehem-Judah.] This is a full Answer to one Part of his Question, giving him an Account where he commonly lived; tho' his Occasions carrying him to Bethlehem-Judah, he now immediately came from thence.*

But I am now going to the House of the LORD.] This is an Answer to the other Part of his Question: For Shiloh, where the House of God was settled, was in the Tribe of Ephraim; (Josh. xviii. 1.) and thither, like a good Man, he intended first to go, and give Thanks to God for restoring his Wife to him; and, perhaps, to offer an Expiation for her Sin; and then to return to his own Home, on the Side of Mount Ephraim.

And there is no Man that receiveth me to House.] Whereby he was in danger to lie in the Street all Night.

Ver. 19. *Yet there is both Straw and Provender for our Asses, and there is Bread and Wine for me, and for thy Handmaid, and for the young Man which is with thy Servant.] He uses very civil and humble Language, and also signifies he did not desire to be chargeable to any body; being so well provided with all things necessary, that he need not be a Burden to him that would entertain him.*

There is no Want of any thing.] But only of a Lodging.

Ver. 20. *And the old Man said, Peace be with thee.] He saluted him kindly, after the usual Manner that Friends and Neighbours greeted each other.*

Howsoever.] Do not speak of that.

Let all thy Wants be upon me, only lodge not in the Street.] I had rather entertain thee at my Charge, than suffer thee to lie in the Street.

Ver. 21. *So he brought him into his House, and gave Provender for their Asses.] Took care both of them and of their Beasts, at his own Costs, as the Words seem to import.*

And he washed their Feet.] As the Custom was in those Countries after Travelling.

And did eat and drink.] Sat down to Supper.

Ver. 22. *And as they were making their Hearts merry.] Eating and drinking very freely.*

Behold the Men of the City, certain Sons of Belial.] See Deut. xiii. 13.

Beset the House round about.] That none might go out; and beat at the Door: As if they would force their Entrance; which made the Master of the House come to ask them what they would have.

And they spake to the Master of the House, the old Man, saying, Bring hither the Man that came into the House, that we may know him.] These last Words are capable of a good Meaning, as if they desired only to examine him; and know who he was, and whence he came, &c. but the old Man being acquainted with their wicked Manners, understood their lewd Intentions, and accordingly gave them the following Answer. See Gen. xix. 5.

Ver. 23. *And the Man, the Master of the House, went out unto them, and said unto them, Nay, my Brethren, nay, I pray you, do not so wickedly; seeing this Man is come into my House; do not this Folly.] He endeavours to divert them from their Purpose, with kind Words, and humble Intreaties; urging withal, the Title the Man had to his Protection by the Laws of Hospitality, and the Greatness of the Sin they were about to commit.*

Ver. 24. *Behold, here is my Daughter a Maiden, and his Concubine, them will I bring out now, and humbly ye them, and do with them as seems good unto you; but unto this Man, do not so vile a Thing.] His earnest Desire to preserve the Laws of Hospitality from Violation, (which was a Thing very sacred in those Days) made him forget the Care he ought to have had to preserve his Daughter's Purity. He hoped also, perhaps, that they were not grown yet so wicked, as to offer this Injury to a Neighbour, tho' they regarded not what they did to Strangers, which made him offer them the Man's Concubine also, supposing it better than to let them do Violence to her Husband. He must be considered, as in a Confusion of Thoughts (like Lot. See Gen. xix. 8.) and so not to have minded so much what was right, as what was least wrong.*

Ver. 25. *But the Men would not hearken to him.] And the Levite also, I suppose, absolutely refused to have the old Man's Daughter, or his Concubine, exposed to their Lust: Whence arose a Quarrel, insomuch that they threatened, and designed to kill him, (as he himself tells the Story, xx. 5.) which, it is likely, moved the old Man to persuade him not to be so obstinate; but for the Preservation of his Life, which was in great danger, to yield a little to them: And persuading the Men of the City not to be so furious, they came at last to compound the Matter; and finding the Levite so resolutely bent to defend himself, were content only to have his Concubine (whose Beauty they admired, as Josephus saith, when they saw her come into their City) and*

and to let him and the old Man's Daughter alone. Unto this they agreed, of two Evils chusing the least.

So the Man took his Concubine, and brought her forth unto them.] With her own Consent, it is probable; for she thought her Husband would lose his Life, and she not preserve herself.

And they knew her, and abused her all Night, until the Morning, and when the Day began to spring, they let her go.] Lest the Light should discover who they were that had been so villainously wicked.

Ver. 26. *Then came the Woman at the Dawning of the Day, and fell down at the Door of the Man's House, where her Lord was, till it was light.]* She fell down dead, *ὁπὸ λύπης καὶ αἰσχύνης* (as *Josephus* speaks) with Grief at what she had suffered, and Shame to look upon her Husband; and it may be added, with the excessive Abuse of her Body.

Ver. 27. *And her Lord rose up in the Morning.]* So the Women in those old Times called their Husbands, out of Reverence to them, as the Head of the Wife. See 1 *Pet.* iii. 5.

And opened the Door of the House, and went out to go his Way.] Imagining, perhaps, that they intended to keep her, and he did not know where to find her, but must seek somewhere else by what Means to recover her.

And behold, the Woman his Concubine was fallen down at the Door of the House, and her Hands were upon the Threshold.] She being stretched out at length; as People are sometimes, when they fall down with Weariness upon their Faces into a profound Sleep.

Ver. 28. *And he said, Up, and let us be going.]* Supposing her to be only in a deep Sleep, he began to rouse her up, and to speak comfortably to her (as *Josephus* takes it) knowing she was under a Force, and did not willingly submit to their Filthiness.

But none answered. Then the Man took her up upon an Ass, and the Man rose up, and gat him into his Place.] When he saw she was dead, he made no Outcry; but (as *Josephus* observes) prudently carried her away, as fast as he could, to his own Home.

Ver. 29. *And when he was come to his House, he took a Knife, and laid hold upon his Concubine, and divided her, together with her Bones.]* In the Hebrew the Words are, according to her Bones; that is, some of the Pieces were bigger, some lesser, according as the Joints would suffer her Body to be divided.

Into Twelve Pieces.] That every Tribe might have a Limb of her, *Benjamin* not excepted. Among whom it was to be hoped, there were some who would resent so foul a Fact, tho' committed by their own Brethren.

And sent her into all the Coasts of Israel.] Giving the Messengers a Charge (as *Josephus* observes) to relate how she had been abused, which was the Cause of her Death. He knew not what other Course to take, to have Justice done; for (as *Josephus* there observes, *Lib.* 5. *Antiq.* Cap. 2.) there was no settled Court of Judicature established according to the Law. Which is the Reason he gives (Chapter the Fifth of that Book) why *Eglon* attempted to

subdue the *Israelites*, because they were all in Disorder, the Laws being not put in execution.

Ver. 30. *And it was so, that all that saw it, said, There was no such Deed done, nor seen, from the Day that the Children of Israel came up out of the Land of Egypt.]* They not only condemned the Fact, but were highly incensed at it, as a Crime beyond all that had been heard of since they were a People: For it was a Mixture of Adultery and Murder, with an Attempt of Sodomy; and that upon a *Levite*; a Person consecrated to the divine Service in some lower Ministries.

Consider of it, take Advice, and speak your Mind.] These are either the Words of the Messenger, or rather of the People themselves, who exhorted one another not to pass over this Deed, only with expressing their Abhorrence of it; but to consider, and consult one with another what was to be done, and to declare their Opinion freely, how so heinous a Crime was to be punished. And accordingly we find, in the Beginning of the next Chapter, that, by common Consent, the whole Body of the People met together, to advise about this Matter.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. **A**ND all the Children of Israel went out of their Cities.] The principal Persons who were appointed to represent the rest.

And the Congregation was gathered together.] This Congregation consisted of the Captains of Thousands and Hundreds, &c. which had been established by *Jethro's* Advice, together with the principal Citizens, as *Corn. Bertram* probably thinks, whom they called to this Assembly.

As one Man.] Except the People of *Jabesh-Gilead*, xxi. 5, 8. and they of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, who had no Sense of this Wickedness. For there was a general Summons, no doubt, issued out by the Command of their Rulers, to require every one to meet at a certain Place, mentioned in the following Words, or otherwise to forfeit their Lives.

From Dan even to Beer-sheba, with the Land of Gilead.] That is, all *Israel* on this side *Jordan*, and on the other, were of the same mind in this Matter.

Unto the LORD to Mizpeh.] There was a Place of this Name in the Land of *Gilead*, as we read, xi. 11. but this *Mizpeh* here mentioned was in the Confines of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, for which Reason it is sometime ascribed to the former, *Josh.* xv. 38. and sometime to the latter, *Josh.* xviii. 26. being a Place very conveniently situated for a General Meeting of all the People, who often assembled there in future Times, 1 *Sam.* vii. 5, 6, 7, 16. x. 17. And it was not far from *Shiloh*, which made it the more convenient; because from hence they might, upon any Occasion, immediately go to consult the divine Majesty; which they intended to do now, when they had dispatched the Business

Business for which they met here, which was to examine the Crime of which the *Benjamites* were accused ; and if there were good Proof made of it, to consider how to punish it as it deserved. Whence it is that *Josephus* saith, this Congregation met in *Shiloh*, Εἰς τὴν Σιλόβου συλλεγόμενοι καὶ πρὸ τῆς σκηνῆς ἀδικαιοφάνειας, as if it were the same with *Mizpeh*. And indeed, in this History, there is a little difference made, because they were so near one to another. See *ver. 26. xxi. 2.* But *Mr. Mede* thinks that here was a famous Place of Prayer, which is the House of God mentioned in those two Verses. For so the Author of the First Book of *Maccabees* saith, iii. 46. That when the holy City and Sanctuary lay desolate, by the Tyranny of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, the People assembled together at *Maspah*, to make their Supplications unto God, Ὅτι τόπος προσευχῆς εἰς Μάσφα τὸ πρότερον τῷ Ἰσραὴλ, because at *Maspah* had been, in former times, a Place of Prayer for Israel ; and therefore some of the Jewish Doctors say, the first Synagogue was built here, and make this the Original of all those which were so frequent in After-times : For here, say *Kimchi* and *Abarbinel*, all the remaining Kings of Canaan assembled (after the Battle at *Gibeon*) to fight with Israel, *Josh. xi. 3.* And here *Joshua* finished his Victories over the *Canaanites*, *ver. 8.* and therefore here, it is probable, he built an Altar unto the LORD, in Memory of so great a Deliverance. But this Conjecture is founded upon a plain Mistake ; for the Land of *Mizpeh*, where *Joshua* compleated his Victories, was far from this, in the most Northern Parts of Canaan, near *Lebanon*, beyond the Fountains of *Jordan*.

Mr. Mede also, and *Corn. Bertram* think, that hither they brought the Ark upon this great Occasion, and so might properly be said to be gathered unto the LORD. But this seems to me improbable, that they should remove the Ark hither, when it was so near them in *Shiloh*, to which they might as well go, as bring it to them. And as for that Phrase, *Unto the LORD*, it is no Argument that either the Ark was here, or so much as a Place of Prayer ; for where all the People of God were assembled in any Place, there God was in a special Manner present ; as when they all assembled to make *David* their King, it is said he made a League with them in *Hebron* before the LORD, though there was no Ark nor Altar there, 2 *Sam. v. 3.*

I see no reason therefore to believe, that the *Israelites* were now gathered to *Mizpeh* as a Place of Prayer, (for *Shiloh* was appointed for that Purpose, which was very near it) but as a fitting Place for such a great Assembly to meet, and consult what was to be done in the present Case. That was their Business here ; and when they had Occasion to enquire of God, and to Fast, (and Pray, no doubt) they went to *Shiloh*, to the House of God. See *ver. 26.* and *28.*

Ver. 2. And the Chief of all the People, even of all the Tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the Assembly of the People of God.] The Word we translate *Chief*, is in the Hebrew the *Corners*, who were the Strength and Support of

the People, as the Corner-stones are of a Building, viz. the Heads of their Tribes, Rulers of Thousands, and Rulers of Hundreds, Fifties, and Tens ; who kept the People in some kind of Order, (now that they wanted a supreme Governor, and the Courts of Justice were unsettled) and, it is likely, brought them along with them to this General Assembly ; which, in all probability, met in the open Air, as they anciently did among the *Romans*, *Athenians*, and other People, as many learned Men have observed. And *Lycurgus*, as *Plutarch* tells us, gave this Reason for it, that noble Rooms, adorned with Pictures and Statues, and such like Ornaments, did not contribute εἰς εὐεργίζον, to right Counsels, but rather did hurt, by distracting their Minds, and turning them from their Business : But the true Reason was, because vast Multitudes met together, which no House would contain, and therefore they assembled in the Field ; as *Livy* tells us, when the Cause of *Appius Claudius* was heard, the People were cited to come into the *Campus Martius*. Lib. 6. Cap. 20.

Four hundred thousand Footmen that drew Sword.] That is, together with so many of the People (for there could not be so many Chieftains) that came ready armed, to do as they should be directed. I have often observed, that the Armies of the Jews were all Infantry, there being no Horses bred in their Country. There are those, who, by the *Corners of the People*, understand, not their Chiefs, but all the Tribes of Israel, (making the next Words the Explication of these) who made up this great Number of four hundred thousand ; because, saith *Coccejus*, all the People, gathered together, is like an House that hath Corners. But I shall not trouble the Reader with various Interpretations.

Ver. 3. Now the Children of Benjamin heard, that the Children of Israel were gone up to Mizpeh.] They could not be ignorant of such an universal Concourse of the whole Nation, except themselves, nor of the Cause of their Meeting ; but when they were told of it, would take no notice of it, being stupidly insensible of the Crime that had been committed among them, or foolishly confident of their own Strength ; or rather, imagining their Brethren would attempt nothing by War against them.

Then said the Children of Israel, Tell us, how was this Wickedness.] The Hebrew Word *Dabru* (tell) being in the Plural Number, denotes, that they spake to more than one ; and therefore, in all Probability, not only the *Levite*, but the good old Man (his Host) and his Servant were there, to give an Account of the Fact.

Ver. 4. And the Levite, the Husband of the Woman that was slain, answered and said, I came into Gibeah, that belongeth to Benjamin, I and my Concubine to lodge.] He relates from the Beginning how it was ; and they confirmed it, by their Testimony to the Truth of it. He being called her Husband, it proves she was his Legal Wife.

Ver. 5. *And the Men of Gibeah rose up against me.]* A great Number of them, who were not restrained by the rest; and therefore he imputes the Crime to them all.

And beset the House round about me by Night, and thought to have slain me.] For he resolved to lose his Life, as *Rabag* here observes, rather than submit to their abominable Desires.

And my Concubine have they forced, that she is dead.] But tho' he preserved himself, he could not deliver her from them; but they abused her to Death.

Ver. 6. *And I took my Concubine, and cut her in Pieces, and sent her throughout all the Country of the Inheritance of Israel; for they have committed Lewdness and Folly in Israel.]* Such a very heinous Crime, as he thought the whole Nation was bound to censure.

Ver. 7. *Behold ye are all Children of Israel, give here your Advice and Counsel.]* They all detested, he presumed, such foul Wickedness, and therefore desires them to consider and resolve how to punish it. This could not be debated by all the Multitude; therefore some of the principal Persons, I suppose, were deputed to sit in Council, and hear the Cause, and then report their Opinion to the several Tribes.

Ver. 8. *And all the People arose as one Man, saying, We will not any of us go to his Tent, neither will we any of us turn into his House.]* The Report being made from the great Council, and their Opinion declared, the People all agreed to keep in a Body till they saw Justice done, according to their Resolution.

Ver. 9. *And now this shall be the Thing we will do to Gibeah, we will go up by Lot against it.]* This seems to be a popular Motion, who are in love with Equality, and therefore desire, by their Officers, that it may be determined by Lots who shall go to War, and who shall stay at home to make Provision for the Army; for they did not know how long they should continue abroad, and it was not easy to provide for such a Multitude.

Ver. 10. *And we will take ten Men of an hundred throughout all the Tribes of Israel, and an hundred out of a thousand, and a thousand out of ten thousand, to fetch Victuals for the People.]* So one Man took care that nine of his Brethren wanted nothing; and ten took care of ninety, &c. In the whole, there were forty thousand of the four hundred thousand who went out to forage for the Army.

That they may do, when they come to Gibeah of Benjamin, according to all the Folly that they have done in Israel.] That the rest might be wholly intent upon punishing the Inhabitants of *Gibeah* according to their Deserts.

Ver. 11. *So all the Men of Israel were gathered together against the City, knit together as one Man.]* Nothing could contribute more to their good Success, than this Unity and Concord among the Officers and Soldiers, who all agreed to put this Resolution in execution.

Ver. 12. *And the Tribes of Israel sent Men through all the Tribe of Benjamin.]* But first it was thought prudent and just, by the Rulers of the People, to send an Embassy to their Brethren, to desire them to hearken unto Reason;

and therefore there was a select Number chosen out of every Tribe, who went to every City of *Benjamin* (it is probable) to offer such Terms of Peace, as might prevent the War upon *Gibeah*. Or, they sent this Message to every Family in *Benjamin*, which were originally ten, for *Benjamin* had so many Sons; from whom sprang such a Number of People, that it made *R. Solomon* say, From *Rachel* were descended twelve Tribes: For there were two Sons of *Joseph* which made two Tribes, besides these ten Families of *Benjamin*, who were so powerful and valiant, that it put them up with Pride, and was the Cause of their Ruin.

Saying, What Wickedness is this that is done among you?] In the first place, they were ordered to represent the Greatness of the Crime that had been committed among them.

Ver. 13. *Now therefore deliver us the Men, the Children of Belial, which are in Gibeah.]* This was agreeable to the Law of Nations, by which the *Philistines* had thus demanded *Samson* of the *Israelites*, who had done them mischief, xv. 10. See *Grotius*, who gives a great many other Examples of it out of *Pausanias*, *Strabo*, and other Authors. *Lib. 2. de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. 21. Sect. 4.

That we may put them to death.] If the *Benjamites* themselves would not do justice upon them.

And put away Evil from Israel.] According to the Direction *Moses* had given in his Law, *Deut. xiii. 5*. For the Sin is taken away, when it is duly punished.

But the Children of Benjamin would not hearken to the Voice of their Brethren the Children of Israel.] They seem to have been as unanimous in the Defence of this Wickedness, as the rest of the Tribes were in their Endeavours to have it punished. For, quite contrary to all their Brethren, who, upon the Hearing of this Crime, met together, examined into it, sent Messengers to desire the Malefactors might be delivered to be punished, before they would enter upon a War, they most perversely refused to come to their Assembly, or deliver up the Malefactors, or so much as excuse the Fact, much less deny it, but prepare themselves to protect such lewd Criminals with all their Power. One can scarce think that there were no good Men left among them, but they were so few, that they had no Authority; and the Generality were so depraved, that they took part with the evil Doers. Perhaps they took it ill, that the other Tribes should meddle with the Concerns of theirs; but if they had had any Goodness in them, they would have saved them this Labour, by calling the Offenders to an Account themselves: Which they not doing, made the whole Tribe guilty of the Crime of a few, and provoked God justly to give them up to pursue their own Destruction.

Ver. 14. *But the Children of Benjamin gathered themselves together out of the Cities unto Gibeah, to go out to Battle against the Children of Israel.]* Instead of hearkening to their Brethren, or giving any Reason of their Refusal to satisfy their Desires, they prepare themselves to fight with them.

Ver.

Ver. 15. *And the Children of Benjamin were numbred at that Time out of the Cities, twenty and six thousand Men that drew Sword.*] So the Chaldee expressly mentions *twenty-six thousand*, but the Vulgar faith only *twenty-five thousand*, and the LXX of the Roman Edition *twenty-three thousand*; but other Copies have *twenty-five thousand*, as *Josephus* also hath: Who imagined, I suppose, that the Number of *twenty-six thousand* would not agree with the Account which follows, of *twenty-five thousand and one hundred* slain in the last Battle, and in the Pursuit of them, ver. 35, 45. and *six hundred* only escaped, ver. 47. which make the Number of *twenty-five thousand seven hundred*. But they should have considered, that the two former Battles could not be fought without Loss on the *Benjamites* Side, when so many fell of the *Israelites*, ver. 21, 25. And the other thousand Men may well be supposed to have then perished, or some of them to have been left to defend their Cities; where they were afterward slain, ver. 48.

Beside the Inhabitants of Gibeah, which were numbered seven hundred chosen Men.] Who were left, it is likely, (or at least Part of them) to defend that City, while the rest before-mentioned went out to Battle.

Ver. 16. *Among all this People, there were seven hundred chosen Men left-handed.*] Who could use their Left-hand, as well as their Right, in any Exercise. See iii. 13.

Every one could sling Stones at an Hair's Breadth, and not miss.] Such excellent Marksmen there have been in other Countries; particularly in the Islands called *Baleares*, where they were bred from Children to hit a Mark with a Stone flung out of a Sling, or else to lose their Breakfast, as *Strabo* relates. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozyicon*, P. 1. Lib. 3. Cap. 10. This extraordinary Skill in their Arms, (for it is likely they handled other Weapons with the like Dexterity) and their natural Courage, emboldened them, with such a small Number, to undertake a War against such a vast Multitude of their Brethren. Which warlike Disposition of theirs was prophesied of by *Jacob*, when he faith, *Benjamin shall raven as a Wolf*; which is an undaunted, fearless Creature, Gen. xlix. 27.

Ver. 17. *And the Men of Israel beside Benjamin, were numbered four hundred thousand that drew Sword, all these were Men of War.*] This is mentioned again, to shew that they all persisted stedfast in their Resolution, (ver. 2, 8.) to see Justice done upon the Men of *Belial*, before they would return to their own Home.

Ver. 18. *And the Children of Israel arose, and went up to the House of God.*] In *Shiloh*, which was not far from *Mizpeh*, and asked Counsel of God, by *Urim* and *Thummim*, as they did i. 1. The *Targum* hath it, they asked Counsel by the WORD of the LORD. Some of their principal Persons; that is, were sent to desire God to direct them; as he was wont to do in all great Affairs concerning the Safety of their Commonwealth. For so God himself ordained, that the High Priest should appear before him, with the Breast-Plate of Judgment, to ask Counsel of him for them in all their

weighty Concerns. See *Exod.* xxviii. 30. *Numb.* xxvii. 21.

And said, Which of us shall go up first against the Children of Benjamin? And the LORD said, Judah shall go up first.] The same Question and Answer which we read in the Beginning of this Book; there being a Pre-eminence, we may observe all along, given to the Tribe of *Judah*.

Ver. 19. *And the Children of Israel rose up in the Morning, and encamped against Gibeah.*] These Words seem to tell us, that *Judah* was only to lead the Van, (as we now speak) and stand in the Front of the Battle, to make the first Assault; but that all the rest went up with them.

Ver. 20. *And the Men of Israel went out to Battle against Benjamin.*] When the *Benjamites* heard that *Israel* were encamped against *Gibeah*, they came to the Relief of it; and the *Israelites* marched out of their Camp to engage them.

And the Men of Israel put themselves in Array to fight against them at Gibeah.] The Battle was near that City.

Ver. 21. *And the Children of Benjamin came forth out of Gibeah.*] Those Forces which were left in *Gibeah* for its Defence, issued out upon the *Israelites* in their Rear, as their Brethren fought them in the Front.

And destroyed down to the Ground of the Israelites that Day twenty and two thousand.] Since God bid them go up, it may seem strange that they should receive such a Defeat. But it is to be observed, that he did not promise them Success; of which the *Jews* give these Reasons: Some of them say, that they fought him imperfectly, and therefore he gave them an imperfect Answer. So *D. Kimchi*, They did not ask him if he would favour their Enterprize, as they did at the last, when they said, *Shall we go up, or shall we desist?* That is, if we shall not succeed, we will cease the War. And then a clear and full Answer is returned, *Go up, for to-morrow I will deliver them into thy Hand*, ver. 28. But *Abarbinel* thinks they did not ask Counsel in a due Place, nor by the proper Person; but by some other than *Phineas* the High Priest, of whom there is no mention till the third time they went to consult the Oracle, ver. 28. But a better Reason is given in *Pirke Eliezer*, where they say, God was angry with the *Israelites* for their Neglect of him, in suffering Spiritual Adultery among them, while they were very earnest to punish Carnal. So they made God's Answer to have been, when they enquired of him the Reason of the Miscarriage, *Ye are zealous against the Adultery of the Tribe of Benjamin, but not against the Idol of Micah*, Cap. 38. And, indeed; they fell early into Idolatry after the Death of *Joshua*, and the Elders that survived him, (as we read in the Second Chapter of this Book) with which, though the *Benjamites* were defiled as well as others, yet he used them as Scourges to punish the rest; intending, in due time, to take a terrible Vengeance on them, both for that, and all their other Sins.

Ver. 22. *And the People the Men of Israel, encouraged themselves.]* Exhorted one another, not to be disheartened by their Loss, but to renew the Fight; for they knew they had a good Cause, which made them the bolder to hope for Victory.

And set their Battle again in Array, in the Place where they put themselves in Array the first Day.] They were not so superstitious as to imagine, the Place wherein they fought was unlucky; and that with the Change of it, they should change their Fortune (as they now speak) but confidently resolved to encounter them in the same Spot of Ground where they were overthrown before. Though there are those that think the Ground was not well chosen, and that they were the more easily defeated, because they fought so near *Gibeab*; whose Name imports, that it was situated on high, which gave them greater Advantages to annoy the *Israelites*.

Ver. 23. *And the Children of Israel went up, and wept before the LORD, until Even.]* They seem to have been sensible that this was one Cause of their Loss, that they had not more solemnly fought the LORD, as they now do; but with greater Grief for their Loss, than for their Sin.

And asked Counsel of the LORD.] The Targum here uses again the same Phrase; asked Counsel, *by the WORD of the LORD, saying, Shall I again go up to Battle against the Children of Benjamin my Brother?* They seem to imagine that God did not approve of their going to War among themselves, who were all Brethren.

And the LORD said, Go up against him.] Here is a Leave to go up, but without any Promise of Success; which they should have desired.

Ver. 24. *And the Children of Israel came near against the Children of Benjamin the second Day.]* Near to *Gibeab*.

Ver. 25. *And Benjamin went forth against them out of Gibeab the second Day, and destroyed down to the Ground of the Children of Israel Eighteen thousand Men: All these drew Sword.]* They had now destroyed Forty thousand, which was a much greater Number than the *Benjamites* had in their whole Army.

Ver. 26. *Then all the Children of Israel, and all the People went up.]* Not only all the Warriors, but other People.

And came unto the House of God, and wept, and sat there before the LORD.] Upon the bare Ground, as they used to do in very great Sorrow.

And fasted that Day before the LORD until Even.] Afflicted their Souls for their Sins, which they had not done before; at least, not with such Seriousness as now they did.

And offered Burnt-Offerings.] This had not been done before. That is, they had not made such solemn Supplications to God, as now they did by these Offerings. See upon *Levit. i. 3.* And in particular, it is evident, That in ancient time, *Burnt-Offerings* were offered as Prayers for Forgiveness of Sins, that so they might obtain God's Blessing, *Job i. 5.* And *Balaam* (who no doubt understood the ancient Rites of Religion) offered these Offerings to obtain Power from God to help *Balak*, and destroy the *Israelites*, *Numb. xxiii. 3, 15, &c.*

And Peace-Offerings before the LORD.] These were offered to acknowledge Benefits received (which ought to accompany our Prayers) and some of them also were a kind of Prayer to God, for the Benefits they hoped still to receive. See upon *Levit. vii. 16.*

Ver. 27. *And the Children of Israel enquired of the LORD.]* The same Expression is again in the Targum, *By the WORD of the LORD.*

For the Ark of the Covenant of God was there in those Days.] They had enquired of the LORD before, but not as they ought to have done; and therefore no mention is made till now, of the Presence of God continuing among them. For, confiding in the Justice of their Cause, and their vast Forces, they seem to have made but slight and perfunctory Addresses to God, before they undertook the War.

Ver. 28. *And Phineas the Son of Eleazar, the Son of Aaron, stood before it in those Days.]* To stand before it, is as much as to minister unto God before the Ark, where he resided. See upon *Deut. x. 8. xviii. 7.* Some think this is here set down to direct us to the Time when this War was made, which was not long after the Death of *Josua* (as I said before, *xix. 1.*) otherwise *Phineas* must have been now (if this were after the Time of the Judges) above Three hundred Years old, which is far beyond the Age to which Men then lived; for it was above so many Years since he did that noble Fact mentioned in *Numb. xxv. Saidus Batricides*, therefore, more justly makes him to have been High-Priest only twenty-five Years; and the *Chron. Alexandr.* mentions three other Priests between him and *Eli*, as Mr. *Selden* observes, *Lib. 1. de Succession. in Pontif. Cap. 2.*

Saying, Shall I yet again go out to Battle against the Children of Benjamin, my Brother, or shall I cease? This is a plainer Query than either of the former, (as *Pet. Martyr* here observes) for at first they only asked what Tribe should first go up, presuming the War was fit to be made, *ver. 18.* and the second Time only, Whether God would have them renew the Fight, *ver. 23.* But now they ask, Whether they should proceed in the War, or desist from any further Attempt? that is, saith he, They leave it wholly to God's Pleasure; desiring to do no more, if he did not think good to accompany them with his Blessing.

And the LORD said, Go up, for to-morrow I will deliver them into thy Hand.] Accordingly he condescended to give them a gracious Answer, assuring them of a speedy Victory.

Ver. 29. *And Israel set Liars-in-wait round about Gibeab.]* This seems to intimate, that in the former Onsets, they had relied too much upon their Numbers: But now, tho' they were encouraged by God himself, they grew more humble, and less audacious in their Enterprize, laying Ambushes secretly in several Places, on several Sides of the City.

Ver. 30. *And the Children of Israel went up against the Children of Benjamin on the third Day, and put themselves in Array against Gibeab, as at other Times.]* I suppose they appeared in the same Place mentioned *ver. 22.* as if they intended

intended to renew the Fight there. And this was perhaps the third Day after the last Battle ; one having been spent in going to *Shiloh*, and another in Fasting and Prayer there. Or, by *the third Day*, may be meant the third Day of Battle.

Ver. 31. *And the Children of Benjamin went out against the People, and were drawn away from the City.*] The Children of *Israel* pretending to avoid fighting, and to flee from them ; as we read in the next Verse they had agreed.

And they began to smite of the People, and to kill, as at other Times.] In the two former Battles.

In the Highways of which one goeth up to the House of God.] That is, to *Shiloh*.

And the other to Gibeab in the Fields.] So called, to distinguish it from this *Gibeab* ; which, as I said, stood upon an Hill, as the other did in lower Ground.

About thirty Men of Israel.] Whom they killed in the Rear of their Army, as they retreated.

Ver. 32. *And the Children of Benjamin said, They are smitten down before us, as at the first.*] From this Flight they presumed they should get a new Victory over such Cowards.

But the Children of Israel said, Let us flee, and draw them from the City into the Highways.] But this was only a Stratagem of the *Israelites*, to draw them away from *Gibeab*, into a more advantageous Place of setting upon them.

Ver. 33. *And all the Men of Israel.*] All that were posted in a certain Place, whither they designed to draw the *Benjamites*.

Rose up out of their Place, and put themselves in Array at Baal-Tamar.] The Sight of such a Body of Men appearing unexpectedly ready to encounter them, must needs be a great Surprise to the *Benjamites*, who thought of nothing but pursuing those that run away from them.

And the Liers-in-wait of Israel came forth out of their Places.] At the same time, they that were placed in Ambush behind them, rose up to assault the City.

Even out of the Meadows of Gibeab.] Whether it be translated the *Meadows*, or the *Plains*, or the *Flat Ground*, that lay before the City, it is not material ; for the Sense is the same. See *Lud. de Dieu*.

Ver. 34. *And there came against Gibeab Ten thousand chosen Men out of all Israel.*] Some look upon these as a Detachment (as they now speak) from the main Body at *Baal-Tamar*, who marched to assault the City on one side, while the *Liers-in-wait* assaulted it on the other.

And the Battle was sore, for they knew not that Evil was near them.] The *Benjamites* fought stoutly ; but were not sensible of the Danger they were in to be destroyed.

Ver. 35. *And the LORD smote Benjamin before Israel, and the Children of Israel destroyed of the Benjamites that Day, Twenty and five thousand, and an Hundred Men ; all these drew the Sword.*] This is a general Account of the Fight, and of the *Benjamites* Loss ; the Particulars of both are related in the following Verses.

Ver. 36. *So the Children of Benjamin saw that*

they were smitten.] There was an apparent Overthrow given them by the *Israelites* : The Manner of which is described from the Beginning of the Action of this Day, to the Conclusion, in the following Part of this Chapter.

For the Men of Israel gave place to the Benjamites.] Seemed to flee before them ; as was before related.

Because they trusted to the Liers-in-wait, which they had set beside Gibeab.] Resolving not to fight till they saw their Ambush had executed what was commanded against the City.

Ver. 37. *And the Liers-in-wait hastened and rushed upon Gibeab.*] Which they did with all speed, as soon as they saw the *Benjamites* withdrawn a good way from the City ; and fell upon the Inhabitants on a sudden.

And the Liers-in-wait drew themselves along, and smote all the City with the Edge of the Sword.] Having entered the City, they spread themselves into the several Parts of it, and killed all they found therein.

Ver. 38. *Now there was an appointed Sign between the Men of Israel, and the Liers-in-wait, that they should make a great Flame with Smoke to rise up out of the City.*] They had agreed before-hand, that when the City was taken by the *Liers-in-wait*, they should set it on fire ; whereby the *Israelites* might know, when it was time to face about, and fight with the *Benjamites*.

Ver. 39. *And when the Men of Israel retired in the Battle, Benjamin began to smite, and kill of the Men of Israel, about Thirty Persons ; for they said, Surely they are smitten down before us, as in the first Battle.*] Till that Sign was given, they retreated as if they were beaten, and lost some Men ; whereby the *Benjamites* were deceived into secure Hopes of a new Victory.

Ver. 40. *But when the Flame began to arise out of the City, with a Pillar of Smoke, the Benjamites looked behind them, and behold, the Flame of the City ascended up to Heaven.*] It is likely the *Israelites* shouted, when they turned about to fall upon the *Benjamites* ; which made them look back to see what unexpected Supplies they had received.

Ver. 41. *And when the Men of Israel turned again, the Men of Benjamin were amazed.*] At this sudden Change, from flight to fighting.

For they saw that Evil was come upon them.] They being beset by the *Israelites*, both behind and before.

Ver. 42. *Therefore they turned their Backs before the Men of Israel.*] Whom they had pursued ; but now ran away from them.

Unto the Way of the Wilderness.] For they were beset on all other Sides.

But the Battle overtook them.] That is, The Men of War pursued them so closely, that they could not escape.

And them which came out of the Cities, they destroyed in the Midst of them.] Or, they that came out of the Cities ; viz. of *Israel*, helped to cut them off.

Ver. 43. *Thus they inclosed the Benjamites round about, and chased them, and trod them down with ease.*] For they made no Resistance, but only fought where they might flee for Safety.

Over-

Over-against Gibeab, toward the Sun-rising.] There is another Translation of the latter Part of this Verse, in the Margin of our Bibles, with which I shall not trouble the Reader, because it makes no Alteration in the Sense, which is to shew where the greatest Slaughter of them was made.

Ver. 44. *And there fell of Benjamin Eighteen thousand Men.]* In the Wilderness, Eastward of Gibeab.

All these were Men of Valour.] Stout Soldiers, as appears by the two Defeats they had given to the numerous Army of the Israelites.

Ver. 45. *And they turned, and fled toward the Wilderness, unto the Rock of Rimmon.]* The Remainder of the Army of Benjamin endeavoured to save themselves, by flying to a strong inaccessible Place, which was in that Wilderness.

And they gleaned of them in the Highways Five thousand Men.] They could not flee thither in a Body, but scattered up and down in the Highway; where they picked up Five thousand more, and slew them.

And pursued hard after them to Gidom, and slew Two thousand of them.] And following them very close, as far as to a Place called Gidom, they killed Two thousand more.

Ver. 46. *So all which fell that Day of Benjamin, were Twenty and five thousand Men that drew Sword.]* For they slew in the first Conflict Eighteen thousand; and in several Parties, as they fled toward the Rock Rimmon, Seven thousand more, which make up this Sum. See ver. 15.

All these were Men of Valour.] Who would not surrender themselves, but chose rather to be killed.

Ver. 47. *But Six hundred Men turned and fled to the Wilderness, unto the Rock Rimmon.]* These seem to have turned into some nearer Way unto the strong Hold, than the rest: Or, being with the Foremost, and more nimble than others, (for it was accounted a rare Quality in a Soldier to be swift of Foot) got thither before the Israelites could overtake them.

And abode in the Rock Rimmon four Months.] From whence they durst not adventure to stir, unless it were to fetch Provisions; which they might easily do, the Rage of the Israelites being in a little time slaked by so great a Destruction, and turned into Compassion.

Ver. 48. *And the Men of Israel turned again upon the Children of Benjamin.]* Left their Pursuit of them in the Wilderness, and turned toward the Country of Benjamin.

And smote them with the Edge of the Sword, as well the Men of every City, as the Beast.] Those before-mentioned were Men that drew the Sword; that is, Soldiers. But there were a great many Husbandmen, and Shepherds, and others; whom, in their Fury, they also slew.

And all that came to hand.] Even Women and Children. For they had devoted to Destruction all that came not up to Mizpeh, when they were summoned (xxi. 5.) which none of the Benjamites did; for which reason they slew the Men, Women and Children of Jabesh-Gilead, xxi. 10.

Also they set on fire all the Cities that they came to.] This was as terrible an Execution, as if they had been gross Idolaters, whom they were commanded thus to punish. See Deut. xiii. 15, 16.

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. **N**OW the Men of Israel had sworn in Mizpeh.] When they first assembled there, before they began the War against Benjamin, xx. 1, &c.

Saying, There shall not any of us give his Daughter unto Benjamin to Wife.] They did not think of destroying the whole Tribe, when they took this Oath; but only obliged themselves not to marry with them, no more than with the Seven wicked Nations of Canaan, because they refused to punish that villanous Fact which had been committed among them, and resolved to defend the Malefactors. This made the Israelites to abominate them, as People with whom it was not fit to contract an Affinity.

Ver. 2. *And the People came to the House of God.]* Went up to Shiloh.

And abode there till Even before God, and lift up their Voices, and wept sore.] Some Days after their Fury was over, and they coolly considered what they had done in the Heat of War, their Joy and Triumph for their Victory was turned into Mourning and Lamentation for the Loss of so many of their Brethren: For instead of a Feast, they seem to have kept a Fast; as they did before the last Battle, xx. 26.

Ver. 3. *And said, O LORD God of Israel, why is this come to pass in Israel, that there should be this Day one Tribe lacking in Israel?] This is an usual Way of expressing great Grief, where-with they bewail the Loss of a whole Tribe, which they saw no means how to repair, because there were no Women left in the Tribe of Benjamin, with whom they in the Rock of Rimmon might marry; and they had sworn that none of the other Tribes should give their Daughters to them; so that they must either marry with Strange People, which was against the Law, or remain unmarried, whereby the Tribe would be extinct. They seem also to lament their own excessive Wrath; for why should the Women be destroyed with the Men, who had no share in the Management of Publick Affairs; nor could be supposed guilty of refusing to make Satisfaction for the Injury done to the Levite's Concubine?*

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass on the Morrow, that the People rose early, and built there an Altar.]* There seems to have been no need of this, there being one settled Altar at the House of God, according to the Law of Moses; and then it was unlawful to build another. But some think it was gone to decay in those bad Times; which is very improbable, for they lately offered Sacrifices there, xx. 26. And the daily Sacrifice, no doubt, was continued in Israel, either to the LORD, or the other Gods they joined with him. It is more likely therefore, that they erected a new Altar, upon this present Occasion, when such a multitude of Sacrifices

fices were to be offered by all the People of *Israel*, that the ordinary Altar was not sufficient to contain them. Thus *Solomon* did when he dedicated the Temple, 1 *Kings* viii. 64. And by the Direction of God, it was frequently done in other Places; and not only at the House of God, as by *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* vii, xi, xiv. and *David*, 2 *Sam.* xxiv. and *Elijah*, 1 *Kings* xviii.

And offered Burnt-Offerings and Peace-Offerings.] As they had done before the last Battle. For God having made them Victorious, they thank'd him for it, and prayed him to continue his Mercy to them; particularly begging his Direction, it is probable, in the present Strait wherein they were, about restoring the Tribe of *Benjamin*.

Ver. 5. And the Children of *Israel* said, Who is there among all the Tribes of *Israel*, that came not up with the Congregation unto the LORD.] When Summons went out to call them together, under a great Penalty upon those who absented themselves. See xx. i.

For they had made a great Oath concerning him that came not up to the LORD to *Mizpeh*, saying, Surely he shall be put to death.] This great Oath was in the Nature of a *CHEREM*, as the *Hebrews* call it; whereby it was lawful for the whole Congregation to devote those to Destruction, who did not obey Publick Orders in time of War, or great Distress. See upon *Levit.* xxvii. 29.

This Oath, I take it, was made by the great Assembly of their Rulers (called the whole Congregation) before they summoned the People to *Mizpeh*; as the other Oath (mentioned ver. 1.) was made after the People were come thither, upon the *Benjamites* Refusal to do justice.

Ver. 6. And the Children of *Israel* repented them for *Benjamin* their Brother, and said, There is one Tribe cut off from *Israel* this Day.] They still continued to lament their too great Severity against *Benjamin*; and begin to consult how to repair the Breach they had made.

Ver. 7. How shall we do for Wives for them that remain, seeing we have sworn by the LORD,] The *Targum* continues its usual Style, by the WORD of the LORD.

That we will not give them of our Daughters to Wives?] This was the Question debated in their Common-Council (See ver. 16.) how to bring themselves out of this Difficulty, into which they were brought by their Oath; which being rashly made, it might be thought ought not to be kept. But they had such a Reverence to a solemn Oath, that they resolved to do all that was possible to find a Way to keep their Oath, and yet not to let the *Benjamites* be without Wives.

Ver. 8. And they said, What one is there of the Tribes of *Israel*, that came not up to the LORD to *Mizpeh*?] Some in the Council proposed to make an Enquiry into all their Tribes, whether they could find any that had not regarded the other Oath they had made, ver. 5. And it appeared (as the next Words tells us) that, Behold, there came none to the Camp from *Jabesh-Gilead* to the Assembly.

Ver. 9. For the People were numbered, and behold, there were none of the Inhabitants of *Jabesh-Gilead* there.] A rare Instance of Piety, that none of the whole Congregation of *Israel* (who were now numbred) departed home, till they had been at the House of God, to give Thanks for the Victory he had given them.

Ver. 10. And the Congregation sent thither Twelve thousand Men of the Valiantest, and commanded them, saying,] This was the first Result of their Consultations.

Go, and smite the Inhabitants of *Jabesh-Gilead* with the Edge of the Sword.] This was a City on the other Side of *Jordan* in the Tribe of *Manasseh*; who were ordered to be slain, as publick Enemies, because they had not obeyed the Order of the whole Congregation: and, by refusing to join with them against the *Benjamites*, had made themselves Partakers of their Crimes.

With the Women and the Children.] In this, their Anger transported them again beyond Reason; for these had not offended. And if it be said, they were all under the *CHEREM*, I do not see how they could justify their sparing all Virgins, as we find they did by a Publick Decree; unless we suppose, that God (before whom they now were) dispensed in this case, because of the Publick Necessity.

Ver. 11. And this is the Thing that ye shall do, Ye shall utterly destroy every Male, and every Woman that hath lien by Man.] The *Hebrew* Doctors here raise a difficult Question, as they account it, How they could know those who had lien with Man, from those that had not. *D. Kimchi* fancies; that all the Women were ordered to pass before the Ark, and they who were stopt there, and could go no further, were taken for Virgins. Others, that they passed before the Crown of the High-Priest, and they who had known a Man, turned Yellow or Pale. But these are idle Conceits, and I will mention no more of them, which are still more extravagant; when the plain Account is, That they slew such as were not commonly reputed to be Virgins, and saved those that were. See *Wagen-seil*, in his Confutation of *Lipman's Carmen Memoriale*, p. 400.

Ver. 12. And they found among the Inhabitants of *Jabesh-Gilead*, Four hundred young Virgins that had not known Man, by lying with any Male; and they brought them unto the Camp to *Shiloh*.] Which shews, that the making them pass before the Ark is a foolish Conceit; for they were looked upon as Virgins before they came to *Shiloh*, where the Ark was.

Which is in the Land of *Canaan*.] Which the City of *Jabesh-Gilead* was not; but in the Land taken from the two Kings of the *Amorites*, *Sihon* and *Og*.

Ver. 13. And the whole Congregation sent some to speak to the Children of *Benjamin* that were in the Rock *Rimmon*, and to call peaceably to them.] To give them the Publick Faith, that they might safely return, and be received kindly by the *Israelites*.

Ver. 14. And *Benjamin* came again at that time.] All the Six hundred Men, who had saved themselves in that Fortrefs.

And

Over-against Gibeab, toward the Sun-rising.] There is another Translation of the latter Part of this Verse, in the Margin of our Bibles, with which I shall not trouble the Reader, because it makes no Alteration in the Sense, which is to shew where the greatest Slaughter of them was made.

Ver. 44. *And there fell of Benjamin Eighteen thousand Men.]* In the Wilderness, Eastward of Gibeab.

All these were Men of Valour.] Stout Soldiers, as appears by the two Defeats they had given to the numerous Army of the Israelites.

Ver. 45. *And they turned, and fled toward the Wilderness; unto the Rock of Rimmon.]* The Remainder of the Army of Benjamin endeavoured to save themselves, by flying to a strong inaccessible Place, which was in that Wilderness.

And they gleaned of them in the Highways Five thousand Men.] They could not flee thither in a Body, but scattered up and down in the Highway; where they picked up Five thousand more, and slew them.

And pursued hard after them to Gidom, and slew Two thousand of them.] And following them very close; as far as to a Place called Gidom, they killed Two thousand more.

Ver. 46. *So all which fell that Day of Benjamin, were Twenty and five thousand Men that drew Sword.]* For they slew in the first Conflict Eighteen thousand; and in several Parties, as they fled toward the Rock Rimmon, Seven thousand more, which make up this Sum. See ver. 15.

All these were Men of Valour.] Who would not surrender themselves, but chose rather to be killed.

Ver. 47. *But Six hundred Men turned and fled to the Wilderness, unto the Rock Rimmon.]* These seem to have turned into some nearer Way unto the strong Hold, than the rest: Or, being with the Foremost, and more nimble than others, (for it was accounted a rare Quality in a Soldier to be swift of Foot) got thither before the Israelites could overtake them.

And abode in the Rock Rimmon four Months.] From whence they durst not adventure to stir, unless it were to fetch Provisions; which they might easily do, the Rage of the Israelites being in a little time slaked by so great a Destruction, and turned into Compassion.

Ver. 48. *And the Men of Israel turned again upon the Children of Benjamin.]* Left their Pursuit of them in the Wilderness, and turned toward the Country of Benjamin.

And smote them with the Edge of the Sword, as well the Men of every City, as the Beast.] Those before-mentioned were Men that drew the Sword; that is, Soldiers. But there were a great many Husbandmen, and Shepherds, and others; whom, in their Fury, they also slew.

And all that came to hand.] Even Women and Children. For they had devoted to Destruction all that came not up to Mizpeh, when they were summoned (xxi. 5.) which none of the Benjamites did; for which reason they slew the Men, Women and Children of Jabesh-Gilead, xxi. 10.

Also they set on fire all the Cities that they came to.] This was as terrible an Execution, as if they had been gross Idolaters, whom they were commanded thus to punish. See Deut. xiii. 15, 16.

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. **N**OW the Men of Israel had sworn in Mizpeh.] When they first assembled there, before they began the War against Benjamin, xx. 1, &c.

Saying, There shall not any of us give his Daughter unto Benjamin to Wife.] They did not think of destroying the whole Tribe, when they took this Oath; but only obliged themselves not to marry with them, no more than with the Seven wicked Nations of Canaan, because they refused to punish that villanous Fact which had been committed among them, and resolved to defend the Malefactors. This made the Israelites to abominate them, as People with whom it was not fit to contract an Affinity.

Ver. 2. *And the People came to the House of God.]* Went up to Shiloh.

And abode there till Even before God, and lift up their Voices, and wept sore.] Some Days after their Fury was over, and they coolly considered what they had done in the Heat of War, their Joy and Triumph for their Victory was turned into Mourning and Lamentation for the Loss of so many of their Brethren: For instead of a Feast, they seem to have kept a Fast; as they did before the last Battle, xx. 26.

Ver. 3. *And said, O LORD God of Israel, why is this come to pass in Israel, that there should be this Day one Tribe lacking in Israel?] This is an usual Way of expressing great Grief, where-with they bewail the Loss of a whole Tribe, which they saw no means how to repair, because there were no Women left in the Tribe of Benjamin, with whom they in the Rock of Rimmon might marry; and they had sworn that none of the other Tribes should give their Daughters to them; so that they must either marry with Strange People, which was against the Law, or remain unmarried, whereby the Tribe would be extinct. They seem also to lament their own excessive Wrath; for why should the Women be destroyed with the Men, who had no share in the Management of Publick Affairs; nor could be supposed guilty of refusing to make Satisfaction for the Injury done to the Levite's Concubine?*

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass on the Morrow, that the People rose early, and built there an Altar.]* There seems to have been no need of this, there being one settled Altar at the House of God, according to the Law of Moses; and then it was unlawful to build another. But some think it was gone to decay in those bad Times; which is very improbable, for they lately offered Sacrifices there, xx. 26. And the daily Sacrifice, no doubt, was continued in Israel, either to the LORD, or the other Gods they joined with him. It is more likely therefore, that they erected a new Altar, upon this present Occasion, when such a multitude of Sacrifices

fices were to be offered by all the People of *Israel*, that the ordinary Altar was not sufficient to contain them. Thus *Solomon* did when he dedicated the Temple, 1 *Kings* viii. 64. And by the Direction of God, it was frequently done in other Places; and not only at the House of God, as by *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* vii, xi, xiv. and *David*, 2 *Sam.* xxiv. and *Elijah*, 1 *Kings* xviii.

And offered Burnt-Offerings and Peace-Offerings.] As they had done before the last Battle. For God having made them Victorious, they thank'd him for it, and prayed him to continue his Mercy to them; particularly begging his Direction, it is probable, in the present Strait wherein they were, about restoring the Tribe of *Benjamin*.

Ver. 5. *And the Children of Israel said, Who is there among all the Tribes of Israel, that came not up with the Congregation unto the LORD.]* When Summons went out to call them together, under a great Penalty upon those who absented themselves. See xx. i.

For they had made a great Oath concerning him that came not up to the LORD to Mizpeth, saying, Surely he shall be put to death.] This great Oath was in the Nature of a *CHEREM*, as the *Hebrews* call it; whereby it was lawful for the whole Congregation to devote those to Destruction, who did not obey Publick Orders in time of War, or great Distress. See upon *Levit.* xxvii. 29.

This Oath, I take it, was made by the great Assembly of their Rulers (called *the whole Congregation*) before they summoned the People to *Mizpeh*; as the other Oath (mentioned ver. 1.) was made after the People were come thither, upon the *Benjamites* Refusal to do justice.

Ver. 6. *And the Children of Israel repented them for Benjamin their Brother, and said, There is one Tribe cut off from Israel this Day.]* They still continued to lament their too great Severity against *Benjamin*; and begin to consult how to repair the Breach they had made.

Ver. 7. *How shall we do for Wives for them that remain, seeing we have sworn by the LORD,]* The *Targum* continues its usual Style, by the WORD of the LORD.

That we will not give them of our Daughters to Wives?] This was the Question debated in their Common-Council (See ver. 16.) how to bring themselves out of this Difficulty, into which they were brought by their Oath; which being rashly made, it might be thought ought not to be kept. But they had such a Reverence to a solemn Oath, that they resolved to do all that was possible to find a Way to keep their Oath, and yet not to let the Benjamites be without Wives.

Ver. 8. *And they said, What one is there of the Tribes of Israel, that came not up to the LORD to Mizpeh?] Some in the Council proposed to make an Enquiry into all their Tribes, whether they could find any that had not regarded the other Oath they had made, ver. 5. And it appeared (as the next Words tells us) that, Behold, there came none to the Camp from Jabesh-Gilead to the Assembly.*

Ver. 9. *For the People were numbered; and behold, there were none of the Inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead there.] A rare Instance of Piety, that none of the whole Congregation of Israel (who were now numbred) departed home, till they had been at the House of God, to give Thanks for the Victory he had given them.*

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With the Women and the Children.] In this, their Anger transported them again beyond Reason; for these had not offended. And if it be said, they were all under the *CHEREM*, I do not see how they could justify their sparing all Virgins, as we find they did by a Publick Decree; unless we suppose, that God (before whom they now were) dispensed in this case, because of the Publick Necessity.

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Which is in the Land of Ganaan.] Which the City of *Jabesh-Gilead* was not; but in the Land taken from the two Kings of the *Amorites*, *Sihon* and *Og*.

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Ver. 14. *And Benjamin came again at that time.]* All the Six hundred Men, who had saved themselves in that Fortrefs.

And

And they gave them Wives, which they had saved alive of the Women of Jabesh-Gilead.] Which they thought they might lawfully do, notwithstanding their Oath, because it obliged those only who were present in the Assembly where it was made, not the absent, as they of *Jabesh-Gilead* were.

And yet so they sufficed them not.] For still two hundred wanted Wives.

Ver. 15. *And the People repented themselves for Benjamin.]* This gave Occasion to a new Lamentation, whereby they testified to the *Benjamites*, how sorry they were for what had been done.

Because that the LORD had made a Breach in the Tribes of Israel.] For the Punishment of their Crime was approved by God, tho' they executed it with too much Severity.

Ver. 16. *Then the Elders of the Congregation said, How shall we do for Wives for them that remain, seeing the Women are destroyed out of Benjamin?*] This made them enter into a new Deliberation in the Council of the Elders, how to get Wives for the two hundred Men remaining, since there were none in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, and no more to be found among themselves, without breaking their Oath.

Ver. 17. *And they said, There must be an Inheritance for them that are escaped of Benjamin, that a Tribe be not destroyed out of Israel.]* These Words, *There must be*, are not in the Hebrew, where the Words run thus, *The Inheritance of them that are escaped, is for Benjamin, &c.* That is, the Children of *Benjamin* must have that Part of the Country which was given them by the divine Lot, for their Inheritance, and we must not give it to any other Persons; for then a Tribe would be lost in *Israel*. This was all that some in the Council said, who proposed no Means whereby this Tribe should be restored, but only asserted, It must be done; leaving others to consider how.

Ver. 18. *Howbeit, we may not give them Wives of our Daughters; for the Children of Israel have sworn, saying, Cursed be he that giveth a Wife to Benjamin.]* These Persons, who spake next in the Council, only increased the Difficulty, by putting them in mind, not to think to help their Brethren, by breaking their Oath.

Ver. 19. *Then they said.]* Then some rose up in the Council, after a long Debate, and gave the following Advice.

Behold, there is a Feast of the LORD in Shiloh, yearly.] All the three great Festivals were to be observed in the Place where God settled his Habitation, which was now at *Shiloh*, where all the People assembled to praise God, and to feast one with another. And tho' some think the Feast of the *Passover* to be here meant, yet it is more commonly, and with more Reason, concluded, to be the Feast of *Tabernacles*, which was a Time of exceeding great Joy, because they had newly gathered their Vintage; and then they dwelt in Booths, behind which the *Benjamites* might conveniently lurk, and watch their Opportunity to carry away the Virgins. This Feast of *Tabernacles* also, was the only Season wherein the *Jewish* Virgins were allowed to dance.

In a Place which is on the North Side of Bethel.] This is not a Description of *Shiloh*, whose Situation was better known than any other; (being the Place where all *Israel* went to worship;) but of the Place where they met to dance, which was not in the City, but in the Fields, where they had more Liberty, and a freer Air.

On the East Side of the Highway that goeth up from Bethel to Schechem, and on the South of Lebonah.] This Place is thus particularly described, that the *Benjamites* might know exactly, where they might most advantageously lie concealed, to obtain their Purpose.

Ver. 20. *Therefore they commanded the Children of Benjamin.]* They had some Authority, who made this Order; and *Josephus* calls them the *γερουσία*, the Senate of the Elders, whom *Bertram* makes bold to call the LXX, as if the great Sanhedrim (as the *Jews* call them) was now settled: But I have shewn elsewhere, that is not probable, tho' it be certain, from ver. 16. that there were some chief Persons in every Tribe, whom the People obeyed when there was no Judge in *Israel*, who all seem to have been assembled on this Occasion.

Saying, Go and lie in wait in the Vineyards.] Which were nigh to the Place before mentioned, and, it is likely, encompassed the Place where they danced.

Ver. 21. *And see, and behold, if the Daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in Dances.]* As they supposed they would, because it was the Custom to express their Joy in this manner: And tho' the Women were not bound to come up to these solemn Feasts, but only the Men, yet some devout Women did voluntarily frequent them, as we learn from the Story of *Hannah*. And they that lived at *Shiloh*, and the Places adjacent, no doubt, observed such Times, as the Men did, being near to the House of God; tho' it must be confessed, that Parents were not wont to bring young Virgins unto these Feasts.

Then come ye out of the Vineyards.] When they saw them so engaged.

And catch ye every Man his Wife of the Daughters of Shiloh.] By the Daughters of *Shiloh*, perhaps, are not meant only such as lived in that City, but, thereabouts, who all met on this Occasion.

And go ye to the Land of Benjamin.] Carry them away to your own Country; which they might the more easily do, because Men and Women did not, in those Days, dance together, but Women by themselves. Thus they thought they kept their Oath, because they did not give them Wives, but only suffered them to take them, and to keep them when they had them. The great *Grotius* endeavours to acquit them of violating their Oath by this Rule, That the Signification of an Oath is not to be extended, *ultra receptum loquendi morem*, beyond the received Manner of speaking; therefore they were not perjured, who, when they had sworn not to give Wives to the *Benjamites*, permitted those who were stolen, to live with those that carried them away. *Aliud enim est dare; aliud amissum non repetere*: For it is one thing to give, another not to demand that which is taken.

taken away to be restored. See *Lib. 2. de Jure Belli & Pacis, Cap. 13. Sect. 5.* But this seems to me to be far from justifying them in this Matter; for they did not merely permit them to take these Virgins, but advise and direct, nay, rather order and *command* (as the Word is in the foregoing Verse) to take and carry them away. And therefore what *Josephus* saith to falsify this Business, is not true, that it was done *ἢ τε προτρέποντες ἢ τε κωλύοντες*, the *Israelites* neither exhorting to it, nor prohibiting it.

Ver. 22. *And it shall be, when their Fathers, or their Brethren.]* Any of their nearest Kindred.

Come unto us to complain.] Desiring them to do them Right; which shews they were Men of Authority.

That we will say unto them, Be favourable unto them for our sake.] Do not prosecute them for what they have done, because it was by our Advice, who did not know otherwise how to provide them with Wives.

Because we reserved not to each Man his Wife in the War.] If there be any Fault, it is ours, whose Rage carried the Slaughter too far, and left no Women to preserve their Tribe. They advise them therefore to let their Anger cease now (as *Josephus* speaks) because they had let it break out *ἄμετρος*, beyond all Bounds already.

For ye did not give unto them at this Time, that ye should be guilty.] They put them in mind, that if there was any Guilt, it was not in them that had kept their Oath, and did not give Wives to the *Benjamites*, nor could help their taking them. How *Josephus* came here to add to this Speech, that they said they would tell them, they should have taken care to set a better Guard upon their Daughters, I cannot imagine; for at such Time of Mirth, they always thought themselves secure from Danger.

Ver. 23. *And the Children of Benjamin did so, and took them Wives according to their Number, of them that danced, whom they caught.]* That is, they carried away two hundred, for so many they wanted. With this is commonly compared, by Interpreters, the Rape of the *Sabin* Virgins by *Romulus*: But there was a great deal of Difference; for those were Strangers, over whom *Romulus* had no Power, and therefore was the Cause of a War; but these were *Israelites*, subject to the Authority of the Elders, and was done to make Peace and Quiet. Tho' the truth is, the Elders, in advising this, did wrong to those Parents, whose Children were taken away without their Consent; but this they thought better, than directly breaking their Oath, or letting a Tittle perish; for the Preservation of which, they were constrained to do some hard Things: But in one Thing they did very well, that they permitted them to take Wives only according to their Number; that is, every Man a Wife, and no more. So that tho' Polygamy was tolerated, yet they did not advise or countenance it; no, not for the more speedy Restitution of a Tribe. It might happen, some of these young Virgins were Heiresses, and so their Estates would be translated into another Tribe: But the *Jews* say, that Law against marrying into another

Tribe, and inheriting Land in another Tribe, did not belong to future Ages, but only to that wherein the Division of the Land was made: See our great *Selden, de Success. ad Leges Hebr.* Cap. 18. wherein he alledges this very Example of it, *Fol. 59.*

And they went and returned unto their Inheritance.] In the Land of Benjamin.

And repaired their Cities, and dwelt in them.] And tilled the Land, as *Josephus* adds; so that in time, this Tribe was restored, *εἰς πλεονέχεια ἐν δαίμονίαν*, to its former flourishing Condition.

Ver. 24. *And the Children of Israel departed thence at that time, every Man to his Tribe, and to his Family; and they went out from thence, every Man to his Inheritance.]* To look after his own private Affairs, the publick Concerns being now at an end.

Ver. 25. *In those Days there was no King in Israel.]* There were Elders, ver. 16. who had some Authority; and there was an High Priest, xx. 28. yet for want of a King (as our great Primate *Usher* observes, in his Book of the Power of the Prince) all Things went to wreck, and was in great confusion: And by a King, as *Corn. Bertram* observes (*de Rep. Jud. Cap. 9.*) is meant a supreme Governor, such as *Moses* and *Joshua* were, and after them the Judges: So this Word is used *Deut. xxxiii. 5.* The Meaning of these Words therefore is, That in those Days there was none who had so much Power over all the *Israelites*, as to keep them in order, and not only admonish them of their Duty, but make all their Tribes observe it, by punishing all publick Wrongs, and all Whoredoms, and Idolatries: And, consequently, there was no great *Sanhedrim*, as the *Jews* speak of in future Times, which they would vain find in all Ages foregoing.

Every Man did that which was right in his own Eyes.] For want of such a supreme Authority, every Tribe, and every City; nay, which is more, every private Man, (as *Bertram* there glosses) committed many horrid things, which were not publickly punished. This was the Cause of *Micah's* Idolatry, as was noted before, xvii. 6. and of the *Benjamites* Filthiness, xix. 1. and now of these enormous things done by all the *Israelites*, in killing all the *Benjamites* without distinction, when the Law required the Children should not suffer for their Parents Offence; in binding themselves by such a rash Oath, to give them none of their Daughters to be their Wives; in killing all the Women of *Jabesh Gilead*, who were not Virgins; and now in permitting, nay, ordering this Rape, rather than break a rash Oath; which should teach Men to be thankful for that Authority which is over them, to preserve them from such like Enormities: For which end (as the same Primate there observes) the Custom was, among the ancient *Persians*, to let the People loose to do what they list, for five Days after their King died, that by the Disorders which were then committed, they might see the Necessity of having a King to govern them; and when they had one, to be more obedient to him.



V. G. Gucke Sculp.

A

COMMENTARY

UPON THE

Book of RUTH.



HIS Book is a kind of Appendix to the Book of *JUDGES*, and a Manuduction to the Book of *SAMUEL*; and therefore fitly placed between them. It hath its Title from the Person whose Story is here principally

related; which indeed is wonderful. For she left her own Country, Kindred and Relations, which the *Jews* say (tho' I confess without any good Proof of it) were not only Honourable, but Royal, out of her great Affection to her Mother-in-Law, and her Religion; to live with her in the Land of *Israel*, in a poor and mean Condition. It is very probable, the same Person who wrote the Book of *Judges*, was the Author of this also, viz. *Samuel*; who by adding this to the End of that Book, brought down the History unto his own Times; and gave us withal, the Genealogy of *David*, from *Pharez* the Son of *Judah*, that it might evidently appear, Christ sprang out of that Tribe, according to *Jacob's* Prophecy, *Gen. xlix. 10.* but by a *Gentile* Woman (that all Nations might hope in his Mercy) full of Faith, and of earnest Desire to enter into that Family; which made her despise the Pride of her own Nation, and chuse to live despicably among the People of God.

VOL. II.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. **N**OW it came to pass in the Days when the *Judges* ruled.] These Words direct us to the Time when the Things contained in this Book fell out, tho' we cannot certainly tell what Judge then ruled. *David Ganz* will have it to have been in the Days of *Ibzan*, mentioned *Judges xii. 8.* because he was the only Judge born at *Bethlehem*; from whence he concludes him to have been the same with *Boaz*. But that is so weak a Reason, that *Guil. Vorstius*, in his Annotations upon him, thinks rather it was in the Days of *Deborah* and *Barak*. I shall not mention his Arguments, there being a great Man of our own (the most Learned *Usher*) who places this History in the Times preceding; either in the Days of *Ehud*, when the *Moabites* oppressed *Israel*, or rather of *Shamgar* who succeeded him. Which is the Opinion likewise of *Du Pin*, who takes these Things to have been done about Twenty eight Years after the Death of *Joshua*. See *Usserii Chronol. Sacra. Pars 1. Cap. 12.*

That there was a Famine in the Land.] This inclines me to think, these Things came to pass in the Days of *Gideon*, for that is the only Time that we read of a Famine in the Days of

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the Judges; when the *Midianites, Amalekites,* and the Children of the East, came and destroyed the Increase of the Earth, and left no Sustenance for Israel, nor for their Cattle. Judges vi. 3, 4.

And a certain Man of Bethlehem-Judah.] There were two *Bethlehems*, as I have often noted: one in the Land of *Judah*, the other in the Tribe of *Zebulun* (*Josh. xix. 15.*) They had their Name from the great Fruitfulness of the Place where they were situated; which argues this Famine to have been very fore, that even in these Places there was a Scarcity of Provision.

Went to sojourn in the Land of Moab, he, and his Wife, and his two Sons.] He carried his whole Family with him into the neighbouring Country of *Moab*, which was near to the Land of *Judah*, at the End of the Salt-Sea; and it seems had now Plenty in it, when the Land of *Israel* was famished.

Ver. 2. *And the Name of the Man was Elimelech.]* Who, if we may believe many of the Jewish Doctors, was a noble and potent Person in his Country.

And the Name of his Wife Naomi.] They make her also of a noble Extraction, she being (as the *Talmudists* say in *Baba Bathen*) the Niece of *Naasson*, Prince of the Tribe of *Judah*, and Daughter of his Brother *Salmon*.

And the Name of his two Sons, Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehem-Judah.] The Name of *Ephrathites* is given them, because they were not only born, but, I suppose, bred up, and lived in the same Place with their Father; which from its great Fruitfulness was called *Ephrata*, as well as *Bethlehem*.

And they came into the Country of Moab, and continued there.] Settled their Habitation in that Country, which had not been lawful, unless it had been a publick Calamity, or some great private Necessity, as *Maimonides* observes. See *Guil. Schickard*, in his *Mischpat Hammelech*, Cap. 3. Theorem 10.

Ver. 3. *And Elimelech Naomi's Husband died, and she was left and her two Sons.]* She a Widow, and they Fatherless. This, *Josephus* thinks, was after he had been there Ten Years; but the most, if not all others, think he died a little after he came into this Country.

Ver. 4. *And they took them Wives of the Women of Moab.]* Which was not lawful, unless they had first become Profelytes to the Jewish Religion; as *Aben Ezra* concludes they were, from those very Words from whence others prove the contrary, ver. 15. where it is said, *Orpah returned unto her People, and unto her Gods.* This is a Testimony, faith he, that she had been converted to *Judaism*. But the *Chaldee Paraphrast* is quite of another Opinion, and faith, they transgressed the Commandment of the LORD, by taking to them strange Wives. And so the *Midrash* upon *Ruth*, as *Buxtorf* observes in his *Book de Sponsalibus & Divortis*, Sect. 31.

The Name of the one was Orpah, and the Name of the other Ruth.] Who do not seem to have been of such great Quality as the *Talmudists* fancy, but of common Rank; other-

wife they would not have been bestowed upon Strangers.

And they dwelt there about Ten Years.] After their Marriage.

Ver. 5. *And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them.]* For their Days were cut short, faith the *Chaldee Paraphrast*, because they married strange Women: and for the same Reason (if it be true) they may be thought to have died without Issue; for there is not the least Intimation that either of them had any.

And the Woman was left of her two Sons, and her Husband.] In a very melancholy Condition, being in a Country of Strangers.

Ver. 6. *Then she arose with her Daughters-in-Law, that she might return from the Country of Moab.]* She packed up her Goods, and made herself ready to leave the Country of *Moab*, and her Daughters accompanied her, it being the Custom to conduct those whom they loved, some part of their Way when they went a long Journey.

For she had heard in the Country of Moab, how that the LORD had visited his People, in giving them Bread.] They were such near Neighbours, that they soon had Intelligence in *Moab* what was done in the Land of *Israel*.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore she went forth out of the Place where she was.]* The Necessity which forced her thither no longer remaining.

And her two Daughters-in-Law with her.] Who loved her as their own Mother.

And they went on the Way to return unto the Land of Judah.] This relates unto *Naomi*, for her Daughters had never been there.

Ver. 8. *And Naomi said unto her two Daughters-in-Law.]* When they were come to the Borders of the Country of *Moab*, she said the following Words.

Go, return, each to her Mother's House.] She desires them to accompany her no further, but go back to their own Home. And it seems it was usual in *Moab*, as well as in *Israel*, for Widows to dwell with their Parents. And the Women here also had Apartments distinct from the Men, where the Daughters lived with their Mothers, as the Sons with their Father.

The LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the Dead, and with me.] She dismissed them with her Blessing, praying God would be as good to them, as they had been good Wives to their Husbands, and good Daughters to her.

Ver. 9. *And the LORD grant that ye may find Rest, each of you, in the House of her Husband.]* And that they might be happily settled in Houses of their own, with good Husbands; whom she wishes they might long enjoy in Peace and Quietness.

Then she kissed them.] As was usual, when Friends took their Leave one of another, or when they met together.

And they lift up their Voice and wept.] Were all extremely grieved to think of parting.

Ver. 10. *And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy People.]* They resolved to accompany her to *Bethlehem*.

Ver. 11. *And Naomi said, Turn again, my Daughters, Why will you go with me? Are there yet*

yet any more Sons in my Womb, that they may be your Husbands?] This shews, that the Custom of Mens marrying their Brother's Widow, when he left no Issue, (which was before the Law of Moses, Gen. xxxviii.) was so ancient, that it was derived into other Countries, who were not descended from Abraham.

Ver. 12. Turn again, my Daughters, and go your Way, for I am too old to have an Husband; if I should say I have Hope, if I should have a Husband also to-night, and should also bear Sons.

Ver. 13. Would you tarry for them till they were grown? Would you stay from having Husbands?] She persists in the same Argument, and presses it home, that she was too old to marry, and they too young not to marry again: But should she marry immediately, and be sure she should have Children, nay, Sons, it would be unreasonable for them to wait till they were fit to be their Husbands.

Nay, my Daughters; for it grieveth me very much for your Sakes, that the Hand of the LORD is gone out against me.] She would have them by no means think of any such thing; and likewise represents to them what a mean Condition God had reduced her unto, which was the more heavy, because she was able to do nothing for them.

Ver. 14. And they lift up their Voices and wept again.] It gave them great Trouble, whether they thought of going with her, or of parting from her.

And Orpah kissed her Mother-in-Law.] Took her leave of her. The Jews observe three sorts of Kisses, which were usual and commendable among them, all others being wanton: One in Token of Reverence to any Person's Dignity, 1 Sam. x. 1. A Second at the Meeting of Friends, Exod. iv. 27. A Third at their Parting, of which they give this as an Example. Unto which R. Tanchuma adds a Fourth, saluting of near Relations, Gen. xxix. 11. which is, in a manner, the same with the Second. Drusius thinks there was another, which he calls the Kiss of Prayer, which was in use in the Primitive Church, and taken, he thinks, from the Jews: But Buxtorf saith, he can find no such thing in all their Books. See Lex Talmud. in the Word Nesikab, Fol. 1408.

But Ruth clave to her.] Would not part from her, but steadfastly resolved to go with her to her own Country.

Ver. 15. And she said, Behold, thy Sister-in-Law is gone back to her People, and to her Gods.] The principal of which was Chemosh, as we read Num. xxi. 29. 1 Kings xi. 7. By this it appears, Orpah was not made a Profelyte to the Jewish Religion, but still continued to worship the Gods of her Country. Yet this did not make such a Difference in the Family (as divers Religions commonly do now) but that she loved her Husband entirely, and had a great Affection to his Mother, even after his Death.

Return thou after thy Sister-in-Law.] This may seem strange, that she should, in effect, press her to go and worship Idols; but her Intention was to try her, and to persuade her to do nothing rashly, especially not to change

her Religion, without due Consideration, and weighing well her Reasons for it: For if she had been led merely by her Affection to her, to embrace also her Religion, she might have revolted from it when she died, or when she saw her Condition very desolate.

Ver. 16. And Ruth said, Intreat me not to return from following thee; for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge.] Be content, that is, with any Condition, in her Company.

Thy People shall be my People, and thy God my God.] This is a Resolution to embrace the Jewish Religion entirely, so as to be incorporated with the Israelites, as if she had been a Native among them.

Ver. 17. Where thou diest, I will die, and there will I be buried; the LORD do so to me, and more also, if aught but Death part thee and me.] She resolves that nothing but Death shall make a Separation between them, and not that neither, wholly, for she would lie by her in the same Sepulchre: And this she confirms with an Oath, or solemn Imprecation upon herself, That worse might befall her, than any thing Naomi could suffer, if she did not faithfully adhere to her: Which Form of Speech we find afterwards in many places, 1 Sam. iii. 17. xiv. 44. xx. 13. 2 Sam. iii. 9, 35, &c.

Ver. 18. And when she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, she left speaking to her.] She said not a Word more to her of her leaving her, when she saw she had a settled and well-grounded Resolution, to become a Profelyte to the true Religion. So the Chaldee Paraphrast explains it, representing Naomi as declaring to her at large, That there was a great Number of Precepts (no less than DCXIII.) to be observed by those who would be of her Religion. In particular, the Rest of the Sabbath, to which they were obliged, and to worship one God alone, &c. Unto all which she answered, Whatsoever thy People observe, I will do the same, as if I had been one of them from the Beginning.

Ver. 19. So they two went until they came to Bethlehem.] Which shews they were but in a mean Condition, having no Servant to wait on them, nor an Ass to carry them.

And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the City was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi?] It being reported by them who knew Naomi, that she was returned, all the People ran out of their Houses to see her, and beholding a great Change in her Garb and Countenance, they could scarce believe it was she. But the Arabick and Syriack Versions take it quite otherwise, That all the City rejoiced, and said, This is Naomi. And the LXX, whom they follow, to the same purpose, ἡ χηρὴ ἡ πόλις, The City rang with the News, and they asked if this were Naomi; for several had never seen her before, or did not remember her, but had only heard much of her.

Ver. 20. And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara.] She told them her old Name was not suitable to her present Condition, which required she should rather be called

by

by a contrary ; from whence some gather, that *Naomi* was not the Name given her at first by her Parents, but a popular Name commonly given her by her Neighbours, because of her comely Presence, and courteous Behaviour.

For the Almighty hath dealt bitterly with me.] This is the Reason of the new Name of *Mara*, whereby she would be called ; which signifies *bitter*. *Josephus* saith that *Naomi*, in their Language, signifies εὐτυχίαν, Prosperity, and *Mara* ὀδύνην, Grief and Pain.

Ver. 21. *I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty.]* The *Targum* makes this relate unto her Husband and Children, with whom she went out to the Country of *Moab*, which now were taken away from her ; but it is reasonable to extend it to the Estate they carried along with them, for their Support in a strange Country, where they lived to spend it all.

Why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me ?] God is said to testify against any Persons, when he passes Sentence upon them, and judges them, by sending Afflictions upon them ; at which *Naomi* doth not murmur, but only humbly acknowledges God had inflicted grievous Punishments upon her, which she thought testified his Displeasure.

Ver. 22. *So Naomi returned, and Ruth her Daughter-in-Law with her, which returned out of the Country of Moab.]* As much as to say, This is a brief Account of *Naomi's* Return to her own Country, together with her Daughter-in-Law, who would accompany her.

And they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of Barley-harvest.] The Time of their Return is also noted, which was about the *Passover* ; for after the Offering of the Sheaf, mentioned *Levit. xxiii. 10, 11.* on the second Day of unleavened Bread, they began to cut Barley : Whence he *Chaldee Paraphrast* thus explains these Words, *They came to Bethlehem in the Entrance of the Passover ; and on that Day the Children of Israel began to mow the Sheaf that was to be waved, which was of Barley.*

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. **A**ND *Naomi* had a Kinsman of her Husband's, a mighty Man of Wealth.] So *Gibbor Chail* is well translated ; for Riches make Men mighty and powerful. Tho' the *Chaldee* would have it signify a Man mighty in the Law, by which they do not mean a Man of great Wisdom and Goodness, but as that *Paraphrast* explains it upon *1 Chron. iv. 22, 23.* after the Manner of the *Jews*, (whose Heads are full of their Academies and Sanhedrims) he was the *Rab* or chief Ruler of the Academy of Wise Men at *Bethlehem*.

Of the Family of Elimelech, and his Name was Boaz.] Whose Ancestors are mentioned in the Conclusion of this Book, and his Descendants also, who lived at *Bethlehem*, as he did.

Ver. 2. *And Ruth the Moabitefs said unto Naomi, Let me go into the Field, and glean Ears of Corn.]* This is a great Argument of her Mo-

desty, and dutiful Affection to her Mother-in-Law, that she would not go any whither, no, not to earn something for their Support, without her leave.

After him, in whose Sight I shall find Grace.] Either she did not know that poor Strangers had a Right to glean, as well as the Poor of *Israel*, *Lev. xix. 9, 10.* or out of her great Piety she would not challenge it as a Right, but as a Favour, which she would thankfully acknowledge.

And she said, Go, my Daughter.] This is a Sign of *Naomi's* low Condition, otherwise she would not have suffered her to go and seek for a Supply of their Needs among the poorest sort of People.

Ver. 3. *And she went, and came.]* Into a Field, where she saw some Reapers.

And gleaned in the Field after the Reapers.] Gathered up the scattered Ears of Corn which fell from them, and were left behind them.

And her Hap was to light on a Part of a Field belonging to Boaz, who was of the Kindred of Elimelech.] By the Direction of God's good Providence (not by any Man's Guidance) she came into a Piece of Ground which belonged to the great Man before-mentioned.

Ver. 4. *And behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem.]* It is remarkable, that he followed her into the same Field.

And said unto the Reapers, The LORD be with you ; and they answered him, The LORD bless thee.] Such was the Piety of ancient Times, that they were wont to pray God to prosper the honest Labours of those that they saw employed, who made a Return of the like Prayers for them, which the *Gentiles* themselves practised, especially in Harvest-Time, which they would not begin, by putting the Sickle into the Corn, till *Ceres* had been invoked, as *Virgil* informs us in his *Georgicks*, *Lib. i. ver. 347, 348.*

This is the first Time that we meet with this religious Salutation, *The LORD be with you ;* which we afterwards find was familiar, and was continued even to our Saviour's Days, when the Angel saluted the Blessed Virgin after this manner, *Luke i. 28.*

Ver. 5. *Then said Boaz unto his Servant that was set over the Reapers.]* To see them do their Work, and that they had Provision fit for them ; and, it is likely, to pay them their Wages. *Josephus* calls him ἀρχονόμος, and the *Chaldee* calls him *Rab*, the Master, Ruler, or Governor of the Reapers.

Whose Damsel is this ?] Either she did not appear, when all the City came to see *Naomi* ; or *Boaz* did not take so much notice of her, as to know her again.

Ver. 6. *And the Servant that was set over the Reapers, answered and said, It is the Moabitefs Damsel, that came back with Naomi out of the Country of Moab.]* He did not know her Name perhaps, but he describes her as a Stranger, that, out of love to her Mother-in-Law, and her Religion, had left her own Country, and come to dwell among the *Israelites*. So the *Chaldee Paraphrast* makes him answer, *She is become a Profelyte.*

Ver.

Ver. 7. *And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the Reapers among the Sheaves.*] What she might have demanded by the Law as her Right, she asks as a Courtesy; which, no doubt, moved the Man to be the more obliging to such a modest and well-bred Woman.

So she came.] That is, he admitted her; for perhaps they were not bound to let the Poor come immediately into the Fields; as soon as the Reapers had cut down the Corn, and bound it up in Sheaves, but when it was carried off. They might chuse also, among the Poor, whom they thought most worthy, or most necessitous.

And hath continued even from the Morning until now.] That is, all the Day; for I suppose it was in the Afternoon, when the Heat of the Day was over, that Boaz came to visit his Reapers. So the Servant describes her as a very diligent Woman, who had not intermitted her Labour, but only for a little time, to eat, or to rest herself.

That she tarried a little in the House.] The Meaning is, she went and staid a while in the Tent which was pitched in the Field, for such as were weary to refresh themselves; or for other necessary Occasions. So *Aben Ezra* expounds the Word *House*; in which some think Boaz found her resting herself; and wondering to see a Stranger there, enquired who she was.

Ver. 8. *Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my Daughter?*] A Form of Speech calling for Attention to what is said.

Go not to glean in another Field, neither go from hence.] He would not have her go to glean in any other Field, nor to stir from thence to supply any of her Wants, as appears by what follows.

But abide here fast by my Maidens.] Who reaped as well as Men, (as the next Verse shews) and their Company was the fittest for her on all Accounts. Some think this was a Labour too hard for Women, and therefore they will have it, that his Maidens only came to bring Provisions for the Men, as *Virgil* describes *Thestylis* to have done, in his second *Eclogue*, ver. 10.

Ver. 9. *Let thine Eyes be on the Field that they do reap, and go thou after them.*] Observe their Motions, and follow them.

Have I not charged the young Men that they touch thee not?] Give thee no Molestation, as the *Vulgar* understands it. And so the Word *touch* sometimes signifies, *to do Harm to others*, *Psal.* cv. 15. But the *Chaldee Paraphrast* extends it further, that they should not come near her, but keep at a Distance from her, and consequently offer no Incivility or Rudeness to her, which was too common among Rusticks, especially when they were full of Mirth, in Harvest and Vintage-time.

And when thou art athirst, go unto the Vessels, and drink of that which the young Men have drawn.] There was excellent Water at *Betlehem*, (2 *Sam.* xxiii. 15.) which either the Reapers, or some that attended them, had brought

in Vessels into the Field, to quench their Thirst when they were dry.

Ver. 10. *Then she fell on her Face, and bowed herself to the Ground.*] A Posture of the greatest Reverence and Submission; either in Civil or Religious Worship, and was used when they would express their most grateful Sense of any Favour done them. See *Gen.* xxiii. 7; 12; xxvii. 29, &c.

And said, Why have I found Grace in thine Eyes, that thou shouldest take Knowledge of me, seeing I am a Stranger?] To take Knowledge of any Person, is to shew Kindness in the Scripture Language; and is the Effect of finding Grace, that is, Favour with any one; which was the greater in Boaz, because he had never seen her before, or was not acquainted with her.

Ver. 11. *And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath been fully shewn me all that thou hast done unto thy Mother-in-Law, since the Death of her Husband.*] Naomi had related to some Friends, who had informed Boaz at large of her great Affection to her Mother.

And how thou hast left thy Father and thy Mother, and the Land of thy Nativity, and art come unto a People whom thou knewest not heretofore.] To be a Profelyte to their Religion, (as the *Chaldee Paraphrast* explains it) upon which account the greatest Kindness was due to her.

Ver. 12. *The LORD recompence thy Work, and a full Reward be given thee.*] He looked upon it as a very high Act of Faith and Vertue in her, to leave all that was dear to her in this World, to become a Member of their Church; which he prays God amply to requite. The *Chaldee Paraphrast* makes her say here, *That she was come from a strange People, who were made unworthy to be admitted into the Congregation of the LORD:* But he answers to her, *Our Wise Men say, That the Men of Moab only, not the Women, are excluded from our Society, &c.* See what I have noted upon *Deut.* xxiii. 5.

Of the LORD God of Israel, under whose Wings thou art come to trust.] To seek for Protection, and commit thyself unto his Care and good Providence; which was a pious Confidence so pleasing to God, that the *Chaldee Paraphrast* makes Boaz say, *In this thy Righteousness thou shalt be delivered from the Judgment of Hell, and thy Portion shall be with Sarah, Rebekah, Leah and Rachel;* that is, she should have an eternal Recompence. This Phrase of trusting under the Wings of the divine Majesty, is often used by the *Psalmist*, *Psal.* xvii. 8. xxxvi. 7. lvii. 1. lxi. 4. lxii. 7. xci. 4. All which Places speak of the Shadow, or the Covert of his Wings, which seem to be a Metaphor taken from the Cherubims, who spread their Wings from one Side of the holy Place unto the other, upon which the Divine Majesty sat; which Protection and Safeguard was represented in the Cloud which covered the Israelites in the Wilderness, *Numb.* xiv. 14.

Ver. 13. *Then she said, Let me find Favour in thy sight, my Lord, for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thy Handmaid.*] She humbly begs the Continuance

tinuance of his good Opinion of her, (tho' she acknowledges herself, in the next Words, to be very unworthy of it) for it had given the greatest Consolation to her, in her desolate Condition.

Though I be not like to one of thy Hand-maidens.] So obscure, she means, being a Stranger, and of a Country under an ill Character among them, that she was not equal to one of his meanest Servant-Maids.

Ver. 14. *And Boaz said unto her, At Meal-time come thou hither.]* He enlarges his Favour to her, and orders her at the Time of Repast to come and eat among his Servants. I cannot devise how the ancient Jews came to apply these Words to the Kingdom of the Messiah, and to his suffering Condition here in this World; but so it is, that the *Midrasch*, upon this Place, makes these Words, *Come thou hither*, to signify as much, as *come to thy Kingdom*; and the *Morsel dipt in Vinegar*, to denote, *the Reproaches and Torments of the Messiah*: Which is an Argument that they expected such a King; as should be exposed to such Sufferings as our blessed Saviour endured, who saith, in the *Psalmist*, *They gave me Vinegar to drink*, lxix. 21. which perhaps was the Original of this Application of Boaz his Words to the Messiah, whose Coming they longed for, and found it foretold in more Places than we are aware of.

And eat of the Bread, and dip thy Morsel in the Vinegar.] Under the Name of Bread, is comprehended all the Provision which was made for the Reapers, with which they had Vinegar for Sauce, it being very cooling and refreshing in hot Seasons, as the Time of Harvest was. So *Pliny* observes, Lib. xxiii. Cap. 1. *Aceto summa vis est in refrigerando*; which cooling Quality is taken notice of by *Rashi*, and others, upon this Place.

And she sat beside the Reapers.] With the Women, that is, who reaped.

And he reached her parched Corn.] This seems to signify, that Boaz himself eat with them, or stood by them, to see they were well provided; and took a particular Care of her, unto whom he reached some parched Corn, which was an usual, and no mean Food in those Countries, as appears from 2 *Sam.* xvii. 28. But it may be understood of the Servant set over the Reapers, (ver. 5.) or some of them, who observing her Modesty, that she did not carve for herself, reached to her some of the Provision made for them.

And she did eat, and was sufficed, and left.] There was such Plenty, (Boaz being a great and a good Man) that more was set before them than they could eat; at least, she left some of that which was carved to her. This Meal, I suppose, was after the Heat of the Day was over, in the Afternoon; for then they dined, but their best Meal was a Supper.

Ver. 15. *And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young Men, Let her glean even among the Sheaves, and reproach her not.]* For that looked something like filching to come among the Sheaves. But *Josephus* takes the Sense to be, that she should be permitted, if

she pleased, to cut down Corn herself for her own Use; which is not likely.

Ver. 16. *And let fall also some of the Handfuls on purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not.]* As if she was too bold in gathering what belonged not to her.

Ver. 17. *So she gleaned in the Field until Even, and beat out that she had gleaned.]* It seems they did not in those Days carry home their Gleanings as they gathered them in the Ears, but beat the Corn out with a Rod; and freeing it from the Chaff, carried it away pure, with less trouble than otherwise it would have given them.

And it was about an Ephah of Barley.] An Ephah is commonly taken to be about a Bushel of our Measure. See my Notes on *Exod.* xvi. 36. where it appears, that an Ephah contained ten Omers, and that an Omer was sufficient for one Person's Food for a whole Day; therefore Ruth now had gathered as much as would keep her and her Mother five Days.

Ver. 18. *And she took it up, and went into the City, and her Mother-in-Law saw what she had gleaned.]* That is, wondred at the Quantity.

And she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved, after she was sufficed.] *Josephus* thinks this is spoken of Naomi, that set before her Daughter-in-Law, some Remainders of the Victuals that her Neighbours had brought her in Ruth's Absence; but it rather signifies Ruth's Care of her Mother-in-Law, whom she had in mind, when she was feasted with the Reapers with more than she could eat, (ver. 14.) and therefore brought what she left home for her Refreshment.

Ver. 19. *And her Mother-in-Law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to-day? And where wroughtest thou? Blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee.]* For she concluded, that without the special Favour of some Person to her, it had not been possible for her to have made such a Day's Work.

And she shewed her Mother-in-Law with whom she had wrought, and said, The Man's Name with whom I wrought to-day is Boaz.] Whose near Relation to them Ruth did not yet know.

Ver. 20. *And Naomi said unto her Daughter-in-Law, Blessed be he of the LORD.]* Or rather, *Let him be most blessed*; for Lamed prefixed to *Jehovah* increases the Sense, as in *Gen.* x. 9. See there.

Who hath not left off his Kindness to the Living, and to the Dead.] Continued to be kind to the Relicts of *Elimelech* and his Son, as he had been to them when they were alive.

And Naomi said, The Man is near of kin to us, one of our next Kinsmen.] In the Hebrew, *one of our Goels*, to whom of right it belonged to redeem the Land, and raise up the Name of his dead Brother, by marrying his Widow, according to the Command, *Levit.* xxv. 25. *Deut.* xxv. 5. See upon the 4th Chapter of this Book, Verse 5.

Ver. 21. *And Ruth the Moabitess said, He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young Men.]* Tho' the Word *Nearim* be of the Masculine

Masculine Gender, yet it signifies all young People, and particularly the Maidens, to whom he bid her keep close, *ver. 8.* And so both the LXX, and the *Chaldee* here expound it; and so *Naomi*, it appears by the next Verse, understood it.

Until they have ended all my Harvest.] Not only the Barley Harvest, in which they were now employed, but the Wheat-Harvest, which followed it. See *ver. 23.*

Ver. 22. And Naomi said unto Ruth her Daughter-in-Law, It is good, my Daughter, that thou go out with his Maidens, that they meet thee not in any other Field.] She advises her to accept his Kindness, and not to be found gleaning in any other Field, where she might not be so welcome; and beside, it would look like a Distrust of his Kindness, if not a Despise of it, should she not do as she was invited.

Ver. 23. So she kept fast by the Maidens of Boaz to glean, unto the end of Barley-Harvest, and of Wheat-Harvest.] Which continued many Days; and in all that Time she found, no doubt, the same kind Entertainment, which is not here repeated.

And dwelt with her Mother-in-Law.] Constantly came home to her at Night, after she had done her Labour. Or the Meaning is, when Harvest was ended, she did not go abroad, but kept her Mother company at home; for so the *Hebrew*, *she sat with her Mother-in-Law.*

C H A P. III.

Ver. 1. T H E N Naomi her Mother-in-Law said unto her, My Daughter, shall I not seek Rest for thee?] A Settlement in an House of her own, with a good Husband.

That it may be well with thee.] That she might live more comfortably than she could do with her. The *Chaldee* understands it, as if she confirmed it with an Oath, that she would give herself no Rest, till she had married *Ruth*.

Ver. 2. And now, is not Boaz of our Kindred, with whose Maidens thou wast?] She puts her in mind of what she had told her before, *ii. 20.*

Behold he winnoweth Barley to-night in the Threshing-Floor.] The Corn being gathered, threshed or trodden out, it was next of all winnowed, to separate it from the Chaff; and this was commonly done in the Evening, when the Heat of the Day was over, and cool Breezes began to rise. See *Gen. iii. 8.*

Ver. 3. Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee.] Frequent Bathings were necessary in those Countries, where they continue to this day for Cleanliness; and Anointing for smoothing their Skin, and making them appear more amiable.

And put thy Raiment upon thee.] Her best Clothes, as the *Vulgar* expresses it; or her Ornaments, as the *Chaldee*.

And get thee down to the Floor.] To some Place near it, where she might see, and observe what was done.

But make not thyself known unto the Man.] She would have her conceal herself, so that

Boaz might not see her; nor, as some understand it, any Man else.

Until he shall have done eating and drinking.] Upon such Occasions they made Feasts for the Labourers in the Harvest.

Ver. 4. And it shall be when he lieth down, thou shalt mark the Place where he shall lie.] To sleep, after the Feast was done, and the Guests were gone.

And thou shalt go in.] To the Threshing-Floor, where he lay down, as we read, *ver. 7.*

And uncover his Feet, and lay thee down.] She was not to lie by his Side, for that had been immodest; but at his Feet, in the Posture of an humble Suppliant.

And he will tell thee what thou shalt do.] Either he presently understood her Meaning, when she told him who she was, or she explained it unto him; and *Naomi* did not doubt he would comply with her Desires, and put her into a Legal Way of accomplishing them.

Ver. 5. And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me, I will do.] She put a great Confidence in her Mother's Prudence and Piety, and trusted God would give good Success to her Design; which seemed not very modest, but had no other Intentions than what was agreeable to the Law of God, and accordingly prospered.

Ver. 6. And she went down unto the Floor, and did according to all that her Mother-in-Law bad her.] Concealed herself, but observed when he came into the Threshing-Floor, and where he lay down to sleep.

Ver. 7. And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his Heart was merry.] This is a Sign he had made a great Feast, that he and his Reapers, and perhaps other Neighbours, might rejoice together; and (as the *Targum* understands it) praise God for his Goodness in giving them Plenty, after the Famine that had been in the Land. For so the Words there are, *His Heart rejoiced, and he blessed God, who had heard his Prayer, and removed the Famine from the Land of Israel.*

He went to lie down at the end of the Heap of Corn.] Such was the plain Way of living in those ancient Times, that the most wealthy Persons looked after their own Business, both in the Field, and at Home; which made *Boaz* not go to his House, but lie perhaps upon the Straw in the Floor where his Corn had been winnowed, to secure it from Thieves, till it could be laid up in his Barns. These Threshing-Floors were covered at top to keep off Rain, but lay open on all sides, that the Wind might come in freely for the winnowing of the Corn; which being done, I suppose they were shut up at Night with Doors fitted to them, that if any body lay there, he might be kept warm; and the Corn, as I said, be secured from the Danger of Robbers.

And she came softly, and uncovered his Feet, and laid her down.] Before the Doors were shut up, she came in so softly that none perceived her, and when he was asleep, lay down at his Feet, not naked, as it is supposed he was, but in her Clothes, which we do not find she put off; for she had no Intention of lying with him,

but only giving him an Opportunity to consider what the Law required of him. This indeed looks like a dangerous Practice, which her Mother-in-Law put her upon, exposing both her and him to great Temptations, and therefore many have condemned it, as a very perilous Adventure; but the known Piety both of *Boaz* and *Ruth*, who were not now in their youthful Years (at least *Boaz* was of a great Age) made *Naomi* confident no Sin would be committed by them.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass at Midnight, that the Man was afraid.*] It is a sign he went to Bed sober, tho' merry, in that he waked so soon, and was not drowsy, but apprehensive of something extraordinary; for going to sleep alone, he perceived another in Bed with him. Or, all this is to be ascribed to a Divine Motion, which secretly suggested such Thoughts to *Naomi*, and awaked *Boaz* at a time when Men used to sleep most soundly.

And turned himself.] Being much troubled, he turned himself about, to feel who, or what it was. The Hebrew Word *Jilaphet*, which we translate *turned himself*, is variously interpreted, and hath an unusual Signification put upon it by the *Targum*, and the *Gemara Sanhedrim*, (Cap. 2. N. 4.) where the Modesty and Chastity of *Boaz* is highly extolled, and compared with that of *Joseph*.

And behold a Woman lay at his feet.] He perceived by her Clothes, and (when she spake) by her Voice, that it was a Woman.

Ver. 9. *And he said, Who art thou?*] He had no Thoughts of abusing her, as the *Targum* observes, but only enquires who she was, and what her Business was there.

And she answered, I am Ruth thy Handmaid.] She humbly acknowledges her Meanness, and then acquaints him with her Business.

Spread therefore thy Skirt over thine Handmaid.] In the Hebrew, *Spread thy Wing*; which is a Phrase importing, taking a Person into one's Protection and Tuition; and here not a common one, but such as was Matrimonial. Therefore the *Chaldee* plainly renders it, *Let thy Name be called upon thy Handmaid, by taking me for thy Wife*. See of this Phrase upon *Deut. xx. 30*. From hence, at this day, when two Persons are married among the *Jews*, the Man throws the Skirt of his *Talith* over his Spouse, and covers her Head with it, as *Buxtorf* observes in his *Synagoga Judaica*, Cap. xxxix.

For thou art a near Kinsman.] This is the Reason of her Address to him; which may be rendered, as we translate it in the Margin, *One that hath Right to redeem*; for so the Word *Goel* signifies. See the foregoing Chapter, ver. 20.

Ver. 10. *And he said, Blessed be thou of the LORD, my Daughter.*] He was so far from being incensed at her Boldness, that he wishes her all Happiness.

For thou hast shewed more Kindness in the latter End, than at the Beginning.] He doth not condemn her as immodest, but commends her true Kindness both to her Mother, and to her Husband, which appeared now more than be-

fore, by her Endeavours to preserve his Name and Family.

In as much as thou followest not young Men.] This is an high Commendation, that she did not seek an Husband to satisfy her Lust, but to preserve the Memory of him who was dead.

Whether poor or rich.] That is, of any sort.

Ver. 11. *And now, my Daughter, fear not.*] He would not have her think he had an ill Opinion of her because she took this course, or be in doubt whether her Motion was acceptable to him; or that, being a Stranger, and poor, he would despise her.

I will do unto thee all that thou requirest.] That is, take her to be his Wife.

For all the City of my People doth know that thou art a virtuous Woman.] She had behaved herself so, as to gain a general Report of extraordinary Virtue, as the Hebrew Word *Chajil* imports; which signifies one that doth Things strenuously. The Words we translate, *All the City of my People*, in the Hebrew are, *All the Gate of my People*: By which we rightly understand, all that entered in at the Gate; that is, the whole City. But the Gate being the Place where Justice was wont to be administered, the *Chaldee* Paraphrast interprets it, *It is manifest unto all that sit at the Gate of the great Sanhedrim of my People, that thou art a just Woman*, &c. This shews that *Boaz* was truly a very excellent Person, who thought great Virtue to be a great Portion.

Ver. 12. *And now it is true that I am thy near Kinsman: Howbeit, there is a Kinsman nearer than I.*] This, I suppose, was well enough known to *Naomi*; but she understood his Disposition so well, that she thought it would be in vain to make any Application unto him.

Ver. 13. *Tarry this Night, and it shall be in the Morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a Kinsman, well, let him do the Kinsman's part.*] He resolved to make no longer Delay, than was absolutely necessary; but promises in the Morning she should have Right done to herself, and to her deceased Husband, either by the next Kinsman, or by himself. Some of the *Jews* take the Word *Tob*, which signifies *Good*, and we rightly translate, *Well*, to have been the Name of the other Kinsman, who was called *Tob*: And indeed, it is likely this was a Name among that People, from whence by the Addition of *iah* to it (which was very common) came *Tobiah*. *Rasi* saith he was the Brother of *Elimelech*; but there is no reason to believe this, for when it had been proper to mention his Name in the next Chapter, ver. 1. we only read that *Boaz* called him *Peloni Almoni*, (*Ho, such a one*) which were Words used when they called any one indifferently.

But if he will not do the part of a Kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a Kinsman to thee, as the LORD liveth.] He confirms his Promise to her with an Oath, that if the other Person refused, he would marry her.

Lie down until the Morning.] Having given her this Security, and thereby quieted her Mind, he bids her take a little bodily Rest; which was very needful, having been, no doubt, full

of restless and anxious Thoughts, what would become of her all the former part of the Night.

Ver. 14. *And she lay at his feet until the Morning.*] In the same place where she lay down at first; having no other Design, but only humbly to implore his Justice and Kindness unto her deceased Husband.

And she rose up before one could know another.] That is, before it was light; so that if any body had seen her, they could not have known who she was.

And he said, Let it not be known that a Woman came into the Floor.] Some think he spake this to his Servants: But they were not yet stirring; and if they were, they could not discover whether she was Man or Woman. It was spoken therefore to her, whom he would have to be careful both of her own Fame, and of his; for, as *Josephus* here notes, *Great Caution is to be used to prevent such Rumours; especially when there is some ground for them, ὡς μάλιστα ἐπὶ γυνώσκει.*

Ver. 15. *Also he said, Bring the Veil that thou hast upon thee, and hold it.*] The Hebrew Word *Mitpacath* is variously interpreted, it signifying any kind of Covering. The LXX translate it *περίζωμα*, by which they seem to have meant that which we call an *Apron*, or a *Kirtle*, which is bound about one. The *Vulgar*, *Pallium*; but it is by us most properly render'd a *Veil*; which modest Women were wont to throw over their Heads, to cover their Faces.

And when she held it, he measured six Measures of Barley, and laid it on her.] He would not let her go away without some Token of his Love to her; and nothing was more ready at hand in the Threshing-Floor; than the Corn that lay there. It is not certain how much this *Measure* contained, but, no doubt, in the whole, he gave her as much as she could well carry; and was so kind also, as himself to lay it upon her Shoulder. Some fancy that this Load was too heavy for her, but Barley is far lighter than Wheat: And the *Chaldee Paraphrast* here saith, *Strength was given her from before the Lord to bear it.* And then adds, *Immediately there was a Prophecy that from her should proceed six Righteous Persons; each of which should be blessed with six Benedictions, David, Daniel, his three Companions, and the King Messiah.*

And she went into the City.] The *Chaldee* saith, *Boaz went into the City*; and the *Hebrew* favours this Interpretation. For the Word for *went* is in the Masculine Gender, as in the next Words it is in the Feminine.

Ver. 16. *And when she came to her Mother-in-Law, she said, Who art thou, my Daughter?*] It was so early in the Morning when she returned home, that *Naomi* could not well discern who it was that desired the Gate might be opened; but perceived it was a Woman; whom she calls her Daughter, as they used to do in Civility, it appears by *Boaz* his Language, *ver. 10.* But the *Vulgar* takes it quite otherwise, that she asked her, *What hast thou done, my Daughter?* That is, How hast thou succeeded? And indeed, the Answer favours

this; and the *Hebrew* Words will bear it, if *mi* be interpreted not *who*, but *what*.

And she told her all that the Man had done to her.] How kindly he had treated her; and what Promises he had made her.

Ver. 17. *And she said, these six Measures of Barley gave he me.*] Then she shewed her the Present he made her.

For he said to me, Go not empty unto thy Mother-in-Law.] Without some Token of my Affection. Some imagine Barley (which is not so valuable with us as Wheat) was too mean a thing to bestow upon her. But they do not consider, that in those Countries it was a better sort of Corn than it is in these parts of the World; for Bread was commonly made of it, and that not only by the Poor, but the better sort: Of which we find Examples, both in the Old Testament and the New. See 2 *Sam.* xvii. 28. 2 *Kings* iv. 42. And in the Gospel we read of Barley-loaves, wherewith Christ fed the Multitude; particularly, *John* vi. 9. And indeed, *Pliny* saith this was the most ancient Food. *Antiquissimum in cibis Hordeum*, Lib. 18. *Nat. Hist.* Cap. 7.

Ver. 18. *Then said she, Sit still my Daughter.*] She bids her trouble herself no farther, for she had done enough.

Until thou know how the Matter will fall.] But wait and expect till she saw the Issue: Which the *Targum* expresses piously, in this manner, *Till thou knowest how this matter will be determined from Heaven, and wonderfully disposed.*

For the Man will not be in Rest, till he have finished the thing this day.] She knew him so well to be a Man of his Word, that he would immediately go about the Business, according to his Promise, *ver. 14.*

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. **T**HEN went Boaz up to the Gate.] Where there was a great Concourse of People; and where the Judges sat. So the *Chaldee Paraphrast*, *He went to the Gate of the House of Judgment, where the Sanhedrim sat.* See my Note upon *Deut.* xvi. 18.

And sat him down there.] Among the Elders, as the forenamed *Paraphrast* will have it: But that is not likely, for he called the other Kinsman to come and sit down by him.

And behold, the Kinsman of whom Boaz spake, came by.] See iii. 12.

Unto whom he said, Ho, such an one, turn aside, sit down here.] When they could not think of a Man's Name; or did not think fit to name it, they used these Words, *Peloni Almoni*; which *Daniel* contracts into one Word, *Palmoni*, viii. 13. and is the same with the Greek *ὁδεῖν*.

And he turned aside, and sat down.] Supposing Boaz had some Business with him, he did not go on his way, but turned aside to speak with him. This was about Noon, (as *Josephus* saith) when greater Multitudes were wont to be assembled in such publick Places, than at other times of the day.

Ver. 2. *And he took ten Men.*] He would have a sufficient Number of Witnesses of what he did; which, as *Maimonides* observes, was very necessary in the Espousal of a Person to one's Wife. For, saith he, if it had been enough to do it privately; many would have taken an Harlot into their Houses for a time; and pretend she was their Wife; therefore it was ordained, that after any Man had espoused a Woman, he should marry her publicly, after the Example of *Boaz*, of whom we read *he took ten Men, &c.* *More Nevochim*, Pars 3. Cap. 49.

Of the Elders of the City.] How many Elders there were in every City, is not certain; in so much that *Bertram* conjectures, there was as many as there were Captains of Thousands, of Hundreds, Fifties and Tens, in every City. *Josephus* indeed saith, there were seven, L. 4. *Antiq.* Cap. 6. which perhaps was the determinate Number in his Time. But anciently, one would think there were more, because here *Boaz* mentions *ten Elders* (who were the same with Judges) in the City of *Bethlehem*, which made *Bertram* (*de Republ. Judaica*, Cap. 9.) the more confident, that as the Captains of Thousands, &c. in every City, were the Elders of that City, so there were as many in every City, of the one, as of the other. As for what the *Talmudists* say, That there were *three Judges* in Pecuniary Causes; and *three and twenty* in Capital, it must belong, if it be true, to later times.

And said, Sit you down here. And they sat down.] To hear the Cause he intended to bring before them.

Ver. 3. *And he said unto the Kinsman, Naomi that is come out of the Country of Moab, selleth a Parcel of Land, which was our Brother Elimelech's.*] He calls him their Brother, because he was near of kin to them. And he mentions *Naomi's* Return out of the Country of *Moab*, to intimate, that her Poverty constrained her to sell her Estate, which her Husband left her. That Interest she might part withal, to supply her Necessities, but it could not take away the Right of Redemption; for as *Mr. Selden* observes in his Book *de Successionibus*, Cap. 16. both *Elimelech* the Father, and *Mahlon* the Son, (unto both which *Boaz* was of kin) gave this Patrimony to their Wives before they died: (For otherwise they could not have had the Possession of it.) Or rather, the former gave his Interest to *Naomi*, and the latter his to *Ruth*; which, how it was done, *Maimonides* shews in his Treatise *de Donationibus*, Cap. 6.

Ver. 4. *And I thought to advertise thee of it, saying, Buy it before the Inhabitants, and before the Elders of my People.*] Before those that sat in the Gate of the House of Judgment, and before these Elders, as the *Targum* expounds it; that is, the ten Elders before-mentioned, that the Bargain might be firmly made, and the Estate legally passed over to him.

If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it; but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know.] That is, understand thy Mind in this Matter.

For there is none to redeem it besides thee, and I am after thee.] That is, no other Kinsman remaining of that Family, but they Two.

And he said, I will redeem it.] For it is likely, it lay convenient for him.

Ver. 5. *Then said Boaz, what Day thou buyest the Field of the Hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the Wife of the Dead.*] For they both had an Interest in it; but *Boaz* prudently conceals the Name of *Ruth*, till he had consented to buy the Land, and then tells him whom he must take along with it.

To raise up the Name of the Dead upon his Inheritance.] According to the Law mentioned *Deut.* xxv. 5, &c. as it is commonly interpreted. But it was rather, in *Mr. Selden's* Opinion, the fulfilling of the Law mentioned *Levit.* xxv. 24, 25. *Lib. de Successionibus ad Leges Hebr.* Cap. 15. Where he observes, that this Phrase, *To raise up the Name of the Dead*, (which is mentioned also, *ver.* 10.) is quite different from that mentioned in *Deuteronomy*; being no more, as *R. Solomon* notes, (upon iii. 9.) than if he had said, That the Name of her dead Husband may be had in remembrance; so that when she came into that Field, Men might say, This is the Wife of Mahlon. There is a long Discourse also in *Abarbinel*, upon *Deut.* xxv. to prove that this doth not belong to that Law of a Man's raising up Seed to his Brother. See *Buxtorf, de Sponsal. & Divortiis*, Sect. 27. But if it do, *Grotius* thinks that Law only obliged ὁμοπατέριαι, Brethren by the same Father, to marry the Brother's Widow; but Custom in process of Time obliged the next of kin to do it. See upon *Matth.* xxii. 24.

Ver. 6. *And the Kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I marr my own Inheritance.*] He had a Wife and Children already, which made him afraid to marry a poor Woman with a small Parcel of Land, which would not provide for the Children he might have by her, without diminishing his own Inheritance, of which he was possessed. To which the *Chaldæe Paraphrast* adds, That it might have made great Contentions in his Family: For thus he makes him speak, *I cannot redeem it, (viz. on that Condition) for I have a Wife already; and it is not fit for me to bring another into my House, for fear Brawling and Quarrelling arise in it, and lest I hurt my own Inheritance.* In like manner the *Midrash*, upon this Book, makes him discourse. But *Rasi* interprets the Words, as if the Meaning was, That he should bring a Blot upon his Posterity, by marrying a *Moabitish* Woman (which he thought was forbidden by the Law) for Children are called an Heritage, *Psal.* cxxvii. 3. But in this he acknowledges the Man was mistaken, as many of their ancient Doctors were, for the Law did not forbid the marrying a Woman of that Country. But the plainest Sense is, as *Mr. Selden* observes, That many Inconveniencies might arise in his Family by this Marriage, not only by the Disagreement of his Wives, but by the Difficulty of providing for so many Children as she might bring him, and of giving them

them good Education, and by distracting his Inheritance; and such like things; which he prudently considered, as good Reasons of his Refusal. See *Lib. 1. Uxor Hebr. Cap. 9.*

Redeem thou my Right to thyself, for I cannot redeem it.] Which is thus paraphrased by the Targum, *Do thou therefore redeem it, because thou hast no Wife, which hinders me from redeeming.*

Ver. 7. *Now this was the manner in former times in Israel, concerning Redeeming, and concerning Changing.]* There was no Law, that we can find, about the following Rite, but only Custom which had long prevailed; when Men redeemed Lands that had been alienated, or gave possession of them to another Person.

For to confirm all Things.] To make the Bargain valid.

A Man plucked off his Shoe, and gave it to his Neighbour; and this was a Testimony in Israel.] A sufficient Evidence, that he transferred all his Right unto that Person to whom he delivered his Shoe. It is not easy to give an Account of the Original of this Custom; but the Reason of it is plain enough, it being a natural Signification that he resigned his Interest in the Land, by giving him his Shoe, wherewith he used to walk in it, to the end that he might enter into it, and take possession of it himself.

The Targum, instead of *his Shoe*, hath the *Right-hand Glove*; it being the Custom, perhaps, in his Time, to give that in room of the Shoe. For it is less troublesome to pull off a Glove than a Shoe, and deliver it to another, though it hath the same Signification; as now the Jews deliver an *Handkerchief* to the same purpose. So *R. Solomon Jarchi* affirms, *We acquire, or buy now by an Handkerchief, or Veil, instead of a Shoe.*

Ver. 8. *Therefore the Kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy it for thee.]* After the accustomed Manner.

So he drew off his Shoe.] And gave it to Boaz, in token that he parted with all his Right to him. The Jewish Doctors indeed, differ very much about this Matter; for some say, He that parted with his Right to redeem the Land, pulled off his Shoe, and gave it to him that bought it; but others, that he who bought it, gave his Shoe to him that sold it. The truth is, the Text may be either way understood, but it seems to be most reasonable to think, that he who parted with his Right, parted with his Shoe also. See *Selden Lib. 6. de Jure Nat. & Gent. juxta Disciplin. Hebr. Cap. 5.* where he observes again, how different this was from the Rites used, when one renounced his Brother's Wife. And *Abarbinel* looks upon this as a Demonstration, that the plucking off the Shoe here mentioned, is not the same with that in *Deut. xxv.* For *Ruth* doth not here appear to loose his Shoe, (as the Brother's Wife is there ordered to do, *ver. 9.*) much less did she come to spit in his Face; of which there is not one Word in this Ceremony; which he shews wholly belongs to the Sale of Lands, or to their Redemption, and bringing them back again into the Family to which they belonged.

This appears from the following Words, where Mention is made of nothing but of a Purchase of *Elimelech's* Estate.

Ver. 9. *And Boaz said unto the Elders, and to all the People, Ye are Witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's, and Mahlon's, of the Hand of Naomi.]* She had the first Right in the Land after the Death of her Husband, and her two Sons after her; which she entirely parted withal by this Contract unto Boaz, to whom the other Kinsman had passed over his Right of Redemption, by the political Ceremony of plucking off the Shoe.

Ver. 10. *Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the Wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my Wife.]* He had her by the Right of the same Purchase, and did not succeed into the Right of a Brother, mentioned in *Deut. xxv.* for he was not Brother to *Elimelech*, but only a remote Kinsman of the same Family, as *Abarbinel* there observes, who could not enjoy the Land while she lived, unless he would take her with it; to whom it belonged as long as she lived, and was to go to her Issue when she died.

To raise up the Name of the Dead upon his Inheritance.] That the Parcel of Land which he bought, might still be called by the Name of *Mahlon*, whose Wife Boaz married.

That the Name of the Dead be not cut off from his Brethren, and from the Gate of his Place.] That his Name hereby might be remembered, not only in his own Family, but in all the City of *Bethlehem*; for by the Gate of his Place, is meant all the People that entered in at the Gate.

Ye are Witnesses this Day.] Both that he bought the Land, and *Ruth* together with it, at such a time.

Ver. 11. *And all the People that were in the Gate, and the Elders said, We are Witnesses.]* After this open Declaration, there was no need of any Instrument in Writing to confirm the Purchase.

The LORD make the Woman that is come into thy House, like Rachel, and like Leah.] Such a solemn Benediction of those who were going to be married, was very ancient, as we learn from *Gen. xxiv. 60.* and the Jews continue it to this day, which they say, was always in the Presence of ten grave Persons, at the least, (as Mr. *Selden* observes, *Lib. 2. Uxor. Hebr. Cap. 12.*) conformable to this Example of Boaz, *ver. 2.* and the Eldest of them pronounced the Benediction, which was a Ratification of what was agreed: So our Mr. *Therndike* excellently observes, That the Benediction, which we Christians use in Marriage, is a Sign of the Allowance of the Church pre-supposed, as this Benediction of Boaz and Ruth pre-supposeth the Act to be allowed by the Elders, or Consistory, who sat in the Gate of *Bethlehem*. See *Rights of the Church in a Christian State*, p. 241. In the Review of which he observes, That this seems to be confirmed by the Opinion of *Epiphanius*, who saith, Our Lord was invited to the Marriage of *Cana* in *Galilee*, that, as a Prophet, he might bless the

the Marriage; which, it is certain, the Church hath always practised, to signify, that the Marriage was approved, to be made according to the Laws of God. And therefore *Conradus Pellicanius* (an eminent Man at the Beginning of the Reformation) here well notes, That *Prayers and Benedictions are never to be omitted in Marriage,*

Like Rachel and Leah.] That is, very fruitful.

Which two did build up the House of Israel.] Were blessed with a numerous Posterity. They do not mention the two Handmaids, because these were *Jacob's* principal Wives (and *Rachel* chosen first, as she is here placed) whose Servants bare Children, not for themselves, but their Mistresses. See *Gen. xxx. 3.*

And do thou worthily in Ephrath, and be famous in Bethlehem.] These two are but different Names of the same Place, where *Boaz* and *Ruth* also lived, who seems now to have been present, as *Josephus* represents her, and who they prayed might be a great Example of all Virtue in that City.

Ver. 12. *And let thy House be like the House of Pharez, (whom Tamar bare unto Judah) of the Seed which the LORD shall give thee of this young Woman.]* Both *Boaz*, and all the *Bethlehemites*, derived their Original from *Pharez*, whose Family was very illustrious in *Israel*; and therefore they could not have wished *Boaz* a greater Blessing, than to have as noble an Issue as he was to *Judah*.

Ver. 13. *So Boaz took Ruth.]* Carried her home to his own House, with all the Solemnity, it is likely, which was usual in such cases.

And she was his Wife.] And all other Rites, which were observed in those days, being performed, they were compleatly made Man and Wife.

And when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her Conception, and she bare a Son.] A Year after their Marriage, as *Josephus* saith.

Ver. 14. *And the Women said unto Naomi.]* After *Ruth's* Delivery.

Blessed be the LORD who hath not left thee this day without a Kinsman.] The Hebrew Name of *Goel* (which we translate *Kinsman*) properly belonged to *Boaz*, and not to his Son, who was now born: And yet the Child seems to be here meant, which made the *Arabick* Translator render it, *Hath not left thee without an Heir*, who being to succeed his Father, what he had done, might be ascribed to his Son.

That his Name may be famous in Israel.] They hoped God would make him an eminent Person among them.

Ver. 15. *And he shall be unto thee a Restorer of thy Life.]* Such a Comfort, as to make her, in some sort, young again.

And a Nourisher of thine old Age.] And in old Age, take care of her, and support her.

For thy Daughter-in-Law which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven Sons, hath borne him.] For they hoped he would inherit his Mother's Virtues, and particularly her Affection to *Naomi*, which was so surpassing, that it made her a greater Blessing to her, than a great many

Sons of her own Body would have been; for they would scarce have been able, out of so small a Fortune, to maintain themselves, whereas this being the Son of a rich Father, could afford her also a plentiful Maintenance.

Ver. 16. *And Naomi took the Child, and laid it in her own Bosom, and became Nurse unto it.]* Brought it up with a most tender Affection, for his Mother gave him suck; and then *Naomi* took him from her, and educated him as her own Child.

Ver. 17. *And the Women, her Neighbours, gave it a Name.]* It did not belong to the Neighbours, but to the Father, or Mother, to name the Child; but they advised *Naomi* to call it by a Name suitable to their foregoing Discourse. See *Luke i. 39, &c.*

Saying, There is a Son born unto Naomi.] Unto whom they had promised such great Comfort from this Child, that it moved them to desire it might have the following Name.

And they called his Name Obed.] That is, one who should be very serviceable unto her; for *Obed* signifies *δουλόν*, a *Servant*, as *Josephus* interprets it. By which Name, saith he, *Naomi* called the Child *κατάουμβελίαν γυναικῶν*, by the Advice and Counsel of the Women, *ἐπὶ γηρακομίᾳ αὐτῆς τραφησάμενον*, as one appointed to take care of her in her old Age. The *Targum* thus paraphrases upon this Name, *Who served the LORD of the World with a perfect Heart*; a piece of which Service consisted in giving due Honour unto Parents. Some make it a Question, why this Child was not called *Mablon*, according to the Law which seems to require it? But this hath been answered already, that what *Boaz* did, was not in Obedience to the Law in *Deut. xxv.* for he was not the Brother of *Mablon* (in which case the Child must have borne *Mablon's* Name) but only a remote Kinsman.

He is the Father of Jesse, the Father of David.] For whose sake this whole Book seems to have been written, that it might be certainly known from whom he was descended, the *Messiah* being to spring from him; which is the Reason why the following Genealogy is annexed for the Conclusion of this Book.

Ver. 18. *Now these are the Generations of Pharez.]* He begins no higher, because every one knew that *Pharez* was the Grandson of *Jacob*, and he the Son of *Isaac*, &c.

Pharez begat Hezron.] In the Land of *Canaan*, before they went down into *Egypt*, as we read *Gen. xlv. 12.*

Ver. 19. *And Hezron begat Ram.]* So he is called in *1 Chron. ii. 6.* but in the *New Testament*, *Aram*, *Matt. i. 3.* *Luke iii. 33.*

And Ram begat Amminadab.] These two were born in the Land of *Egypt*, where *Amminadab* also begat *Nahshon*.

Ver. 20. *And Amminadab begat Nahshon.]* Who was *Prince of the Children of Judah*, when they came out of *Egypt*, as the Author of the Book of *Chronicles* observes, *1 Chr. ii. 10.* which is confirmed by *Moses* in his Words, *Num. i. 7. ii. 3. vii. 12. x. 14.* where we find, that in the second Year after their coming out of *Egypt*, he was the principal Person in his Tribe.

And

And Nahshon begat Salmon.] Who was born in the Wilderness, in all probability, and was called also *Salma*, 1 *Chron.* ii. 11.

Ver. 21. *And Salmon begat Boaz.]* Of *Rahab*, whom he took to be his Wife after the taking of *Jericho*, *Matth.* i. 5.

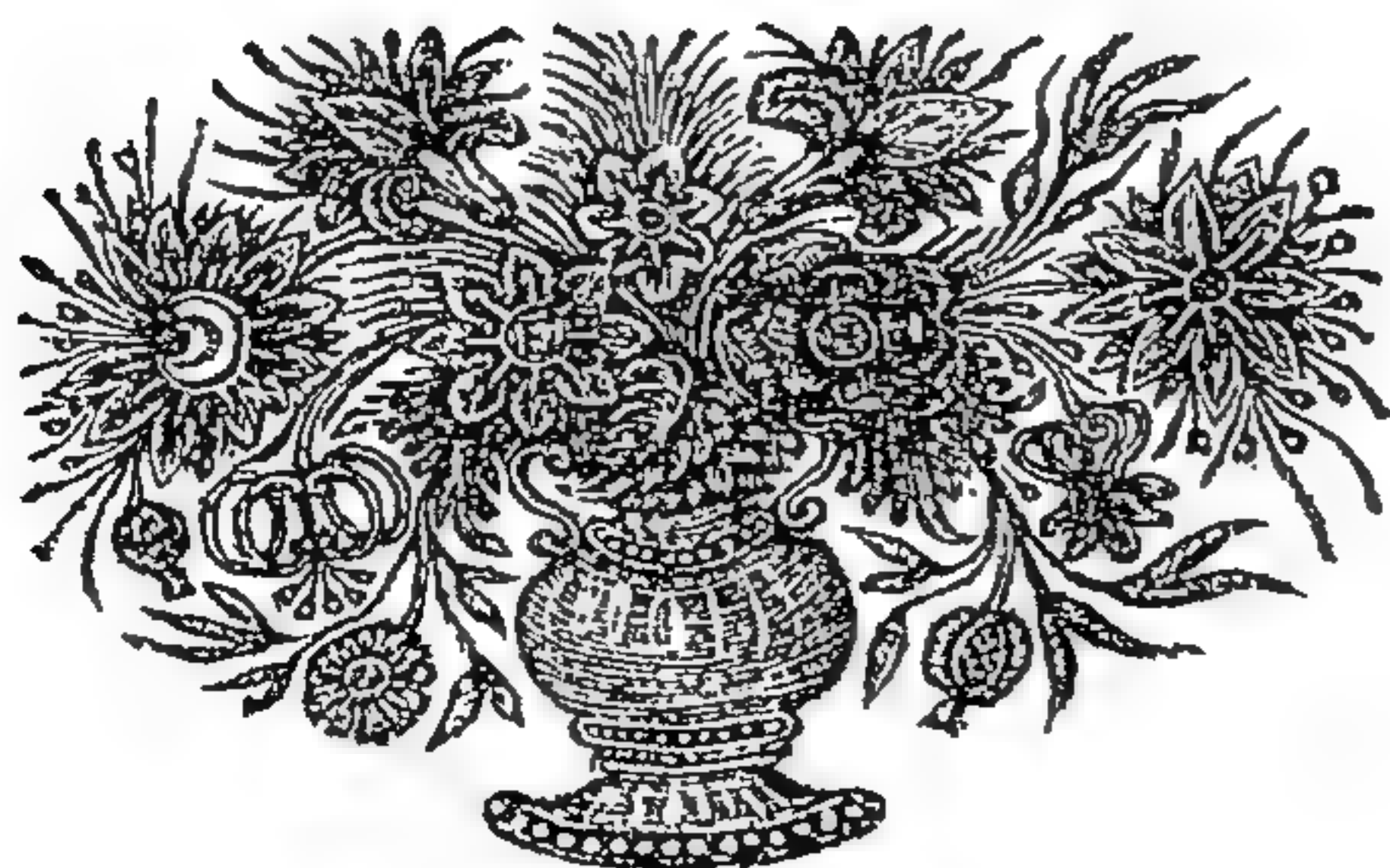
And Boaz begat Obed.] Here the *Targum* makes *Boaz* the same with *Ibzan*, *Judges* xii. 8. (which is altogether improbable) in whose days he saith the Famine, spoken of in this Book, happened; from which they were delivered by the Prayers of *Boaz*.

Ver. 22. *And Obed begat Jesse.]* Who was also called *Nabash*, as some think, and is expressly affirmed by the *Targum*, because *Zeruiah* and *Abigail* are said to be *David's* Sisters, 1 *Chron.* ii. 16. And *Abigail* is said to be the Daughter of *Nabash*, 2 *Sam.* xvii. 25. But *David's* Mother, perhaps, had a former Husband, whose Name was *Nabash*, by whom she had these Daughters.

And Jesse begat David.] Unto whose Time there being but four Generations; and *Salmon*, the first of the four married *Rahab*, after their Entrance into *Canaan*; from thence, to the fourth Year of King *Solomon*, there being four hundred and forty Years (as appears from 1 *Kings* vi. 2.) it must necessarily follow, that unless we suppose some other coming between, (for which we have no good Warrant) these four Persons, *Salmon*, *Boaz*, *Obed*, and *Jesse*, begat a Child in their Old Age. And, indeed, *Boaz* supposes himself to be no young Man, when he spake these Words to *Ruth*, iii. 10. And *Jesse* was counted an old Man, when *David* his Son was a Youth, 1 *Sam.* xvii. 12. And therefore, that Account which *Primate Usher* hath given of this Matter, in his *Chronologia Sacra*, Pars 1. Cap. 12. seems very reasonable, that taking out of that Number of four hundred and forty, the seventy Years that *David* lived, and the four first Years of *Solomon's* Reign; then from their coming into the Land of *Canaan*, to the Nativity of *David*, there remain three hundred sixty and six, as *Aben Ezra* observes in the Conclusion of this

Book. Now these Years may be thus commodiously distributed, if we suppose *Rahab* to have borne *Boaz* in the Forty-second Year after they entered *Canaan*; and if we assign an Hundred and two Years before he begat *Obed*; and an Hundred and eleven to *Obed*, before he begat *Jesse*; and as many to *Jesse* before he begat *David*; which made the just Sum of *Three hundred sixty and six*. And this is nothing strange; for long after this time, we read of very Old Men, who might be capable to beget Children at the Age now mentioned; particularly *Jeboiadab* the High-Priest who lived an hundred and thirty Years, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 15. And in our Days, *Thomas Parr* lived an hundred and fifty-two Years, and begat a Child when he was an hundred and five Years old, as the same *Primate* there observes, and produces a great many other Examples of Persons who lived to a great Age, very vigorous. And, if we could believe the *Jewish* Doctors, they tell us in *Juthasm*, that *Ruth* lived till the Time of *Solomon*, and sat with *Bathsheba*, when he caused a Seat to be set for her at his Right Hand, 1 *Kings* ii. 19. I shall only add, that *Bonfrenius* hath largely confirmed this Opinion of these Persons begetting the Children here mentioned in their Old Age, and confuted those who explain this otherways, by supposing three *Boaz's*, and other Devices, in his Commentary upon the first Verse of this Book. Only he (and *Serrarius* also, who before him was of the same mind) have made a different Distribution of the Three hundred sixty-six Years before-mentioned, by supposing other Years of their Age, wherein these four Persons begat their Sons; which is not at all material.

I shall end all with the *Targum's* Paraphrase on the last Words of this Book; which are, *Jesse begat David King of Israel*. Which some *Latin* Copies following, from thence Cardinal *Cajetan* concludes, this Book was written not only after the Birth of *David*, but after he was made King of *Israel*; that is, after he was anointed by *Samuel* to be King of *Israel*.



C H A P. I.

Ver. 1. **N**OW there was a certain Man of Ramathaim-Zophim.] Either he was born at this Place, or lived there (perhaps both) which is called *Ramah*, ver. 19. of this Chapter; and here *Ramathaim* (in the Dual Number, as the *Grammarians* speak) because it was built upon two Hills; which made it appear like a double City. The Title of *Zophim* seems to be added to it, because it being an high Place, there was a *Watch-Tower* in it: Where, upon occasion, Men were set to observe, who approached from all Parts round about. Or, as *S. Hieron.* and others think, because here was a School of the Prophets; who were wont to seat themselves in such Places as were remote from Company, and fit for Contemplation. Which made *Elijah* and *Elisha* frequent Mount *Carmel*. And thus the *Chaldee Paraphrase* translates these Words, *There was a Man of Ramathaim, a Disciple of the Prophets*. Who in the Book of *Ezekiel* are called *Watch-men*: And from hence some think came the Greek Word *Σύψς*: Which was the Title of Astronomers at the first; who from high Places contemplated the Stars.

Of Mount Ephraim.] This is added to distinguish this from other Places, which had the Name of *Ramah* in other Tribes: Particularly in that of *Benjamin*, *Josh.* xviii. 25.

And his Name was Elkanah, the Son of Jeroham, the Son of Elibu, the Son of Tobu.] It appears by this Genealogy, that *Samuel* was a *Levite*, of the Family of the *Kohathites*; as we read *1 Chron.* vi. 33, 34, &c. See *Mr. Selden* in his Book *de Succession. in Pontif. L. 1. Cap. 18.* where he confutes those who fancy *Samuel* was a Priest, yea, the High-Priest, as *Petavius* himself imagined.

The Son of Zuph, an Ephrathite.] *Ephrata* is the same with *Bethlehem*, which was in the Tribe of *Judah*. Therefore *Zuph* is not called an *Ephrathite*, because he was descended from the *Bethlemites* (for he was a *Levite*) but because he dwelt in that Place; as the *Levites* were dispersed through all the Tribes. So *Mr. Selden* there speaks (from the *Hebrew Doctors*, and the *Targum*) *Domicilii ratione, non sanguinis*; he is called an *Ephrathite*, on the account of his Habitation, not of his Blood.

Ver. 2. *And he had two Wives, the Name of the one was Hannah, and the Name of the other Peninnah, &c.*] *Hannah* seems to have been his first Wife: Who proving barren, his earnest Desire of Children moved him to take another; as *Abraham* had by *Sarah's* Consent. Which was not in those Times disallowed by God: Who saith himself, that he had given to *David* many Wives, *2 Sam.* xii. 8. which shews it was not then a Sin in them to have more than one. See *Grotius* in his Book *de Jure Belli & Pacis, Lib. ii. Cap. 5. Sect. 9, 10.*

Ver. 3. *And the Man went up out of his City.*] For though *Ramah* stood high, yet *Shiloh* stood higher: And he first went down the Hill from *Ramah*, before he could go up to the other.

Nearly to worship, and to sacrifice to the LORD of Hosts in Shiloh.] Where the Tabernacle now was, and where all Sacrifices were to be offered, and no where else. Hither all the People were bound to resort, at the three great Festivals, (*Deut.* xvi. 16.) and not to appear before the LORD empty. Accordingly *Elkanah* not only worshipped God, with Prayers and Thanksgivings; but offered such Sacrifices as suitable to the Festival: And it is likely; presented other Gifts, according to his Ability, as is there required, ver. 17.

And the two Sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, the Priests of the LORD, were there.] Ready to offer such Sacrifices as were brought to the Altar. Whose Service *Elkanah* did not refuse to use; because they were notoriously prophane; But revered their Office, as still *Priests of the LORD*; from whose impure Hands he vouchsafed to accept the Offerings of pious People.

Ver. 4. *And when the Time was that Elkanah offered.*] His Peace-Offerings which were wont to accompany others at the great Festivals. For instance, at the *Passover* they offered not only the Paschal Lamb, but several other Sacrifices; as I noted upon *Deut.* xvi. 7. All the seven Days of unleavened Bread having peculiar Sacrifices belonging to them. See *Numb.* xxviii. And so there was on the seven Days of the Feast of Tabernacles, *Numb.* xxix. Now on some of these Days *Elkanah* offered such Sacrifices as might make a Feast, for his Family and Friends, according to the Law, *Deut.* xii. 12.

He gave to Peninnah his Wife, and to all his Sons and Daughters.] The Males only were bound to appear before God at these Festivals; but devout Persons were wont to bring their Wives also with them; and their Daughters as well as Sons; especially when they dwelt so near the House of God as *Elkanah* did; whose Habitation at *Ramah* was not above seven Miles from *Shiloh*. It doth not appear that there was any peculiar Court at the Tabernacle (as there was afterwards at the Temple) for the Women to worship in by themselves; but they came in with their Husbands, and performed their Duty close to them.

Portions.] Of that Part of the Peace-Offerings, which belonged to him that offered them. Which was the whole; except the Fat which belonged to the LORD, and the Breast and Right Shoulder, which belonged to the Priest, *Levit.* vii. 34. With the rest the Sacrificer made a Feast for himself, his Family, and Friends; giving to every one a Portion of the Sacrifice: Whereby they had Communion with the LORD, by partaking with him of his Sacrifice, which had been offered to him at his Altar.

Ver. 5. *But to Hannah he gave a worthy Portion.*] Or, a double Portion; in token of his extraordinary Respect and Kindness to her.

For he loved Hannah, but the LORD had shut up her Womb; or, though the LORD, &c.] Her Barrenness did not make him love her less, but rather more; because he would support and comfort her under that Affliction.

Ver. 6. *And her Adversary also provoked her sore; to make her fret, because the LORD had shut*

shut up her Womb.] It added to her Affliction, that *Peninnah* set herself against her; and was wont to twit her with her Barrenness, saying, when her Husband sent her a more liberal Portion of the holy Things than she received; 'Tho' he be so kind to you, yet you bring him no Children, as I do: which gave her great Vexation.

Ver. 7. *And as he did so Year by Year, when she went up to the House of the LORD, so she provoked her.*] She constantly took this Occasion to upbraid her with her Barrenness, when her Husband expressed such extraordinary Kindness to her.

Therefore she wept, and did not eat.] Her Grief was so great, that it made her turn the Festival into a Fast. So *Tertullian* understands it, who (in his Book *de Jejunis*, Cap. vii.) saith, God rewarded her Fasting and Prayers with what she desired; vouchsafing, *Inanem cibo Ventrem Filio implere, & quidem Propheta*; To fill her Belly empty of Meat, with a Son, and he a Prophet.

Ver. 8. *Then said Elkanah her Husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou, and why eatest thou not, and why is thy Heart grieved, am not I better to thee than ten Sons?*] In him we have an Example of a most excellent Husband; who patiently tolerated the insolent Humour of *Peninnah*; and comforted dejected *Hannah* with Words full of tender Affection. Which was truly in *St. Peter's* Language, to dwell with his Wives *κατὰ γνώσιν*, according to Knowledge, as *Victorinus Strigelius* here observes. We cannot from the last Words of this Verse conclude, (as some of the Hebrew Doctors do) that *Peninnah* had ten Sons, (which was not such a Pleasure to her, as the Affection he had for *Hannah* would have been) for they may signify, according to the common Language of holy Scripture, only a great many Sons.

Ver. 9. *And Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk.*] The kind Words of *Elkanah* seem to have persuaded her to eat and drink cheerfully. In whom we have an Example of an excellent Wife; who, sensible of her Husband's Kindness, endeavoured to please him, by complying with his Desires, and avoiding all things that might be grievous to him.

Now Eli the Priest.] He was both the High-Priest, and also the Judge at this time of the *Israelites*; being born in the end of *Gideon's* Judicature, and died in the middle of the *Philistines* Tyranny over the *Israelites*; twenty Years before the great Victory *Samuel* got over them at *Eben-ezer*, as *Sir John Marsham* computes, who rightly observes, that whensoever his Judicature began (which is not recorded) it consisted only in hearing and judging Causes by his Pontifical Authority. For he wrought no Deliverance for *Israel*, that we read of: But was such a Judge as *Samuel's* Sons were, viii. 1. and as *Samuel* himself was, after *Saul* began to reign. When all the Days of his Life, he continued to go about the Country and do Justice; which he administered also when he came home, at his own House, vii. 15, 17.

Sate upon a Seat by a Post.] The Hebrew Word is, *upon a Throne*; it being a Seat raised

up to some Height, to make him conspicuous to all that entered into the House of God; where he sat at the Door of it. The *Jews* in *Seder Olam*, and in *Talkut*, have a Conceit, that *Eli* was this very Day, when *Hannah* came to pray, made Judge of *Israel*: So that from hence they date the beginning of his Judicature. But this is a weak Conjecture, built merely on this Phrase, *Sat on his Seat*. Where, as *Abarbinel* observes, he sat as the High-Priest, and not as a Judge. And this was no new thing, but according to Custom, that he might preserve good Order there; give his Advice to those who had occasion to consult him; resolve their Doubts, and give them his Blessing. And he thinks that *Samuel* was born ten Years or more, before the Judicature of *Eli*.

In the Temple of the LORD.] It is not unusual to call the Tabernacle by the Name of a Temple: As the Temple, when it was built, is called a Tabernacle. See *Jer.* x. 20. *Lament.* ii. 6. Yet the *Talmudists*, from the Hebrew Word *Hachil* (which is here used) say, that when the Tabernacle was removed from *Gilgal* to *Shiloh*, the Sides of it were built of Stone, and cover'd at the top with Curtains, having no solid Roof. And from hence they fancy it is called *Beth*, the House of the LORD, ver. 24. which *Maimonides* interprets an House of Stone. But there is no certainty of this: For such Words as these have a larger Sense. And indeed we are taught as much by the *1 Kings* iii. 2. where it is expressly said, that there was no House built unto the Name of the LORD, 'till the Days of *Solomon*: And *2 Sam.* vii. 6. where *Nathan* speaks in God's Name to *David*, in these Words; *I have not dwelt in an House since I came out of Egypt.* See *L'Empereur* in his Preface to *Codex Middoth*.

From the first Words of this Verse, it appears that *Hannah* rose up to go to the Temple at the time of the Evening Sacrifice, for it was after they had dined.

Ver. 10. *And she was in Bitterness of Soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.*] Her Grief returned when she was alone, and thought of her Barrenness; which made her pray with great Vehemence, and many Tears, for a Child.

Ver. 11. *And she vowed a Vow.*] As was usual, when they earnestly longed to obtain what they sought with Prayers and Tears.

And said, O LORD, if thou wilt indeed look upon the Afflictions of thy Handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thy Handmaid.] These are three various Expressions of the same thing: Whereby she declares, tho' with great Humility, how much she was concern'd, to obtain her Request, of being delivered from her Barrenness: For that's the Meaning of looking upon her Affliction, and remembering her. See *Gen.* viii. 1. *Exod.* iii. 7, 16.

But wilt give unto thy Handmaid a Man-Child.] She thrice calls herself his Handmaid, out of a profound Sense of her Meanness, and his Majesty: And desires a *Man-Child*, because only such could wait upon the LORD in the Service of the Tabernacle; as she intended her Son should do, if God bestowed one upon her.

Then will I give unto the LORD all the Days of my Life.] The Levites were not bound to serve at the Tabernacle 'till they were *Twenty five* Years old ; and not after they were *Fifty* : But she devoted him to the Ministry there, from his Childhood, as long as he lived.

And there shall no Razor come upon his Head.] She vowed he would be a *Nazarite* ; Part of whose Description this is, *Numb. vi. 5.* And so the best of the *Jewish* Doctors interpret it ; for the Exposition of the *Chaldee* Paraphrast is very forced : But from hence the Opinion of the *Talmudists* is confuted, who say (in the *Mischna*, in the Title *Sota*, Cap. iii.) that a Man might devote his Child to be a *Nazarite*, before he was of Age ; but a Woman could not. Nor doth any of them take notice of this Example of *Hannah* ; which hath made some think, that possibly they look'd upon this as done by an extraordinary Motion, and therefore not to be a Rule to others ; especially since she did it before her Child was born. See *Jo. Wagenseil*, in his learned Notes upon that Book, p. 448.

Ver. 12. *And it came to pass, that as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli marked her Mouth.]* The inward Anguish of her Soul, it is probable, made the Motions of her Mouth, and her Countenance, very different from what is usual.

Ver. 13. *Now Hannah she spake in her Heart ; only her Lips moved, but her Voice was not heard : Therefore Eli thought she had been drunk.]* Hearing her say nothing, but only seeing her Lips move a long time ; with such Gestures, it is likely, of her Body, Hands, and Eyes, as argued a very great Commotion ; he took her to be disordered with the Wine she had drunk liberally at the fore-named Feast. For it is apt to make one talk much ; and the great Agony wherein she was, might something distort her Face.

Ver. 14. *And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken ? Put away thy Wine from thee.]* He seems to bid her go to Bed and sleep ; and then come and pray to God.

Ver. 15. *And Hannah answered and said, No, my Lord ; I am a Woman of a sorrowful Spirit, and have drunk neither Wine nor strong Drink.]* Of the Difference between *Wine* and *strong Drink*, see *Numb. vi. 3, 5.* Great Affliction of Spirit makes one distaste Meat and Drink.

But have poured out my Soul before the LORD.] An usual Expression for sincere and fervent Prayer.

Ver. 16. *Account not thy Handmaid for a Daughter of Belial.]* This is a Phrase signifying the most lewd Persons, that regarded neither God nor Men. See *Deut. xiii. 13.*

For out of the abundance of my Complaint and Grief have I spoken hitherto.] The Accusation against her being very foul, she purgeth herself from it very earnestly ; but in a modest manner, and with due Respect to the Office which *Eli* held in the Church.

Ver. 17. *And Eli answered and said, Go in Peace ; and the God of Heaven grant thee thy Petition that thou hast asked of him.]* Her sober and respectful Answer convinced the old Man of his Error ; and moved him to dismiss her with his Blessing, and a solemn Prayer to God, that he would grant her Request.

Ver. 18. *And she said, Let thy Handmaid find Grace in thy sight.]* For which she returned him most humble Thanks ; and desired the Continuance of his Prayers.

So the Woman went her way and did eat, and her Countenance was no more sad.] She departed from the Temple with such Satisfaction, and Assurance, her own Prayers and his would be heard, that there remained no more any Token of Sorrow and Grief ; but she eat her Meat, and looked cheerfully.

Ver. 19. *And they rose up in the Morning early, and worshipped before the LORD ; and returned and came to their House in Ramah.]* I suppose she acquainted *Elkanah* with her Prayer, and with *Eli* his Blessing : And it is likely, that he now made a solemn Vow to God, if he would be pleased to fulfil her Petition. See ver. 21.

And Elkanah knew Hannah his Wife, and the LORD remembered her.] According to her Prayer, ver. 11.

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass, when the time was come about, after Hannah conceived.]* The usual time that Women go with Child, before they be delivered.

That she bare a Son, and called his Name Samuel.] Sometimes Fathers, and sometimes Mothers, gave the Name to their Children. See upon *Gen. iv. 26.*

Saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD.] This was the Reason of his Name : Which she gave him, that he as well as she might keep in mind the Interest God had in him ; from whom she obtained him, by ardent Prayers. For *Saul-meel* (which is contracted into *Samuel*) signifies *Ask'd of God*, as we translate this word in the Margin of our Bibles. He was born (as *Sir John Masbam* computes, with great Probability) in the time when the *Philistines* domineer'd over *Israel* for forty Years together, (see *Judges x. 7. xiii. 1.*) but in what Year cannot certainly be determined.

Ver. 21. *And the Man Elkanah, and all his House, went up to offer unto the LORD the yearly Sacrifice.]* At the Feast of the Passover, or some other of the three great Festivals. He is a great Example of Piety ; who carried his whole Family to worship God with him, at those solemn Times which the Law enjoined.

And his Vow.] Which it is likely he made, either when he saw his Wife was with Child ; or perhaps before, when she told him what hope she had her Prayer would be heard, and he worshipped God, ver. 19.

Ver. 22. *But Hannah went not up ; for she said unto her Husband, I will not go up 'till the Child be weaned ; and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide for ever.]* She was not bound by the Law to go up with her Husband : And therefore, tho' she was wont to go, she resolved as became a prudent Woman to stay at home, 'till the Child was strong enough, not only to accompany her, but to be left at the House of the LORD, and be capable of being instructed in the Service of God.

Ver. 23. *And Elkanah her Husband said unto her, do what seemeth thee good ; tarry until thou hast weaned him.]* Interpreters here note, the
sweet

sweet Agreement that ought to be (according to the Example of this happy Couple) between Husband and Wife.

Only the LORD establish his Word.] We do not read of any thing the LORD had spoken about this Child : Unless *Elkanah* look'd upon what *Eli* had said, as spoken by God, because he was God's High-Priest. Or the *Hebrew* Words may be translated, *the LORD establish his Work*, i. e. perfect what he hath begun, by making the Child grow till he was fit for his Service. For the Word *Dabar* signifies any Matter or Thing as well as Word.

So the Woman abode.] At home.

And gave the Child suck till she weaned him.] She herself was his Nurse, and suckled him, after the Example of *Sarah*. (See upon *Gen. xxi. 7.*) And, it is likely, continued to do so (out of her great Affection to him) several Years. Some think three; but it is not improbable *six* or *seven*, as *Lyra* conjectures. And so long I remember one to have suck'd, in the Place where I was born.

Ver. 24. And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three Bullocks, and one Ephah of Flour, and a Bottle of Wine.] As they were not to appear before the LORD empty; so, upon this Occasion, they brought an ample Offering to him; to testify their Gratitude to the Divine Majesty. And it is highly probable, that one of these Bullocks was wholly offered to God, as a *Burnt-Offering*; and the other two were *Peace-offerings*; or, as some will have it, one a *Sin-offering*, and the other a *Peace-offering*. Which had a large Measure of Flour for a *Meat-offering*, and of Wine also attending it; that they might rejoice together before the LORD, when they feasted with him upon the *Peace-offering*.

And brought him unto the House of the LORD in Shiloh; and the Child was young.] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *Hanaar-naar*, the Child was a Child, i. e. wholly at their disposal.

Ver. 25. And they slew the Bullock, and brought the Child to Eli.] They first performed their Duty to God, by offering an whole *Burnt-offering* to him; reserving the rest, I suppose, till they had acquainted *Eli* with God's Goodness to them, that they might all rejoice together.

Ver. 26. And she said, O my Lord, as thy Soul liveth, my Lord, I am the Woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the LORD.] Many take these Words, *As thy Soul liveth*, for an Oath; whereby she assures him, that as certain as he was alive, she was the Person whom he saw in that Place praying, and took for a distemper'd Woman. But others (particularly *D. Kimchi*) think there is nothing of an Oath in them, they being only a Form of Well-wishing to him; as if she said, I wish thee a long Life, that thou may'st educate my Son.

Ver. 27. For this Child I prayed, and the LORD hath given me my Petition which I asked of him.] She had told him nothing of what she prayed for, when he reproved her; but only in general, that she was extremely afflicted for want of something, which she earnestly begg'd of God. But now she acquaints him with it, and with her Vow she made, if

God granted her Desire; which she was now come to accomplish.

Ver. 28. And therefore also I have lent him unto the LORD.] Or restored him to the LORD (as the *Targum* expounds it) from whose Gift she received him.

As long as he liveth, he shall be lent unto the LORD.] Or as the Words may be translated, *All the Days that he shall be desired for the LORD*. That is, as long as God should think fit to employ him in his own House; which was (till he made him a Judge, *vii. 15.*) Then he was not fixed at *Shiloh*, but went about the Country to *Bethel*, and *Gilgal*, and *Mispeh*; and then settled at his own House in *Ramah*, as we read there, *ver. 17.*

And he worshipped the LORD there.] This shews that *Elkanah* was with *Hannah*, and gave his Consent to this Dedication of their Child, to such Service as God should think fit to employ him in: Which he humbly prayed God to accept.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. AND Hannah prayed, and said.] Hymns are wont to be comprehended under the Name of *Prayers*, *Psal. lxxi. 20.* to the Composition of which holy Souls were sometimes raised by Divine Inspiration, in their devout Meditations upon the extraordinary Goodness of God to them. And indeed, it was the most ancient way, as I have observed heretofore, of preserving the Memory of Things to Posterity: Poets being more ancient than Historians, or Orators, as *Lactantius* observes, *L. vii. Div. Instit. Cap. 23.* Nor were the *Western* People less famous for this than the *Eastern*: The *Germans* for instance having their most ancient Annals in Verse; as *Hermannus Conringius* hath shewn out of a great many Authors in his Preface to *Corn. Tacitus, de Germanorum Moribus.*

My Heart rejoiceth in the LORD.] She was acted by the same Spirit which moved *S. James* to give this Direction, *Chap. v. ver. 13. Is any afflicted, let him pray*, (as she did, *i. 10.*) *is any merry, let him sing Psalms*, as she now doth: For she was lately extremely sad and sorrowful, and could not eat: But now by the Goodness of God, is filled with Joy; which made her burst out into this Thanksgiving.

My Horn is exalted in the LORD.] She who was bowed down and dejected, now lifts up her Head and triumphs: For exalting the Horn signifies the Height of Glory.

My Mouth is enlarged over my Enemy.] She was now furnished with a full Answer to *Peninah*, who upbraided her with her Sterility.

Because I rejoice in thy Salvation.] All this Joy and Triumph arose from the Goodness of God to her; who had delivered her from the Reproach of Barrenness: Which raised her, as appears by the Sequel, to the Expectation of far greater things.

Ver. 2. There is none holy as the LORD.] The Holiness of God signifies his peerless Perfections; as *Mr. Mede* hath shewn in many Parts of his Works. See *p. 11.*

For

For there is none besides thee.] Which Perfections are peculiar to himself : For though the Scripture vouchsafeth sometimes unto the Gentile *Dæmons*, the Name of *Gods*, yet it never calls them *Holy Ones*.

Neither is there any Rock like our Rock.] See upon *Deut.* xxxii. 31.

Ver. 3. *Talk no more so exceeding proudly.]* This was good Advice to *Peninnah*, and such like Persons ; not to insult over others who are not so happy as themselves.

Let not Arrogance come out of your Mouth.] Or, as the *Targum* interprets it, *forbear Reproaches*. For so the Hebrew Word *Atat* signifies, *hard Words*.

For the LORD is a God of Knowledge.] None knows what he intends, who perhaps will exalt those who are now abased. Or, he knows how to bring to pass such things, as Men think to be impossible.

And by him Acts are weighed.] Or, by him *Works* are prepared : Even when there is no Disposition in Nature to them.

Ver. 4. *The Bows of the mighty Men are broken, and they that stumbled, are girt with Strength.]* Now the great Sense she had of God's Power, branches out itself into an humble Acknowledgment of this glorious Attribute, in divers Instances. And first, in vanquishing the most Victorious : For *Bows* were a principal Part of Warriors Weapons, *Psal.* xlv. 6. and their *Girdles* being a principal Part of the Military Habit, is elegantly translated to signify Strength and warlike Prowess. Whence *Virgil* calls feeble Persons, unmeet for War, *discinctos, ungirt*, as *Servius* observes. See *Bochart* in *Canaan*, *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 13. whence the Apostle, among the Spiritual Armour, exhorts the *Ephesians* to be *girt about with Truth*, *Ephes.* vi. For to *gird* and to *arm*, to be *girt* and to be *armed*, are the same thing in *Greek* and *Latin* Authors. See also *Psal.* xviii. 39. *lxv.* 6.

Ver. 5. *They that were full, have hired themselves for Bread ; and they that were hungry, ceased.]* to complain of Hunger. This Vicissitude of Human Affairs, especially the sudden Turns there are sometimes from a great height of Prosperity to a very low Condition, and on the contrary, are very wonderful, and seriously to be pondered ; that no Man may be proud, nor any Man despair. The Instances of these in History, are to be found in a great many Authors, besides what our own Experience may furnish us withal.

So that the Barren hath born seven.] That is, many Children. She reflects upon the great Change which God had made in her own Condition. And *Procopius Gazæus* notes, that here, *Hymno Prophetiam admiscet* ; she mingles Prophecy with her Hymn of Praise, and foretels the Fecundity of the Church : For the Number *Seven* denotes a Multitude.

And she that hath many Children is waxen feeble.] The *Jews* fancy, that every time *Hannah* bare a Child, two of *Peninnah's* Children died. But this seems rather to have a general Respect to those that have been fertile, and grow barren when God pleaseth.

Ver. 6. *The LORD killeth and maketh alive ; he bringeth down to the Grave, and bringeth up.]*

The same thing is repeated in different Words ; and the Sense is, the Power of Life and Death is in the hands of God : Whom he pleases he takes out of the World, and whom he pleases he continues in it ; raising Men up even from the Grave, when they were dropping into it. See *Deut.* xxxii. 39. *Psal.* xxx. 3.

Ver. 7. *The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich ; he bringeth low, and raiseth up.]* She acknowledgeth the Power and Wisdom of God, in making Men of different Conditions ; some poor, and others rich ; yea, in making the same Men who were very poor, to become very rich ; and they who were mean and contemptible, become great and eminent. *Theodoret* treats excellently of the wise Providence of God, in not making Men all alike ; but some of a lower, some of an higher Rank : *Oration.* vi. against the Heathens.

Ver. 8. *He raiseth the Poor out of the Dust, and lifteth up the Beggar from the Dunghil ; to set them among Princes, and to make them inherit the Throne of Glory.]* Instances of this in the Holy Scriptures are *Joseph* and *Daniel* ; the one a Prisoner, the other a Captive : But preferred to the highest Dignity, by the Kings of *Egypt* and *Babylon*. And in these later Ages, *Victorinus Strigelius* observes a memorable Instance of the Truth of these Words, in *Matthias Corvinus*, King of *Hungary* ; who was brought out of Prison, and set on the Throne, not by Sedition, nor by Civil War ; but by the unanimous Consent of all the Estates of the Realm, in grateful Memory of the Benefits they had received by his Father, the Great *Hunniades*.

For the Pillars of the Earth are the LORD's, and he hath set the World upon them.] These Words contain the Reason of all that precedes in the five foregoing Verses : For the very Earth being founded, upheld, and supported by the LORD, no wonder that all the Inhabiters of it are in his power, to dispose of them as he thinks good.

Ver. 9. *He will keep the Feet of his Saints, and the Wicked shall be silent in Darknes.]* Pious Affections in those Days rose up, many times, to the Height of Prophecy : Whereby God continued in that Nation his true Relation, in the midst of their idolatrous Inclinations. Accordingly here *Hannah* begins to predict the Deliverances of the *Israelites*, (who were God's *Holy Ones*, or *Saints*, by being peculiarly separated to him and his Service) from the hand of the *Philistines*, and other Enemies : Who she prophesies should stumble and fall, as Men do in the Dark, when the *Israelites*, by God's Direction, succeeded in their Enterprizes.

For by Strength shall no Man prevail.] As appeared afterwards in *Goliath*.

Ver. 10. *The Adversaries of the LORD shall be broken in pieces ; out of Heaven shall he thunder upon them.]* As he did literally when *Samuel* fought with the *Philistines*, vii. 10. and when *David* also vanquished them, *Psal.* xviii. 13. *Procopius Gazæus* applies this to the Assumption of Christ, with the Mission of the Holy Ghost, and the happy Success of the Apostles Preaching, and to Christ's second Coming.

The LORD shall judge the Ends of the Earth.] As he did when he subdued the *Philistines*, who

who lived in the Extremity of the Country of Judea, Westward : And now sorely oppressed the Israelites.

And he shall give Strength unto his King.] That is, to David. Of whom the prophecies ; who was most properly God's King, whom he appointed in the room of Saul ; who by his Disobedience forfeited his Kingdom, and was rejected by God.

And exalt the Horn of his Anointed.] God commanded Saul to be anointed by Samuel, x. 1. but it was upon Condition, which he not fulfilling, the same Person was commanded to anoint David, xv. 29. xvi. 1. Upon which the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and rested on David, xvi. 13, 14. Whom God so wonderfully protected, that all the Subtlety and Power of Saul could not destroy him : And when he came to the Throne, God wonderfully exalted him, as she here speaks : By enlarging his Dominion very far, and making him such a glorious Prince (*higher than the Kings of the Earth*) that he was the most eminent Type of the great King of all, our LORD Christ, to whom these Words in the fullest Sense belong : ' For who doth not see, saith ' St. Austin, (in his xvii. Book, *de Civitate Dei*, ' Cap. iv.) that the Spirit of this Woman, ' (whose Name was Anna, which signifies ' Grace) prophesied of the Christian Religion, ' the City of God, whose King and Founder ' is Christ ; and of the Grace of God, from ' which the Proud are estranged, that they ' may fall ; but the Humble are filled with it, ' that they may rise : Which is the chief Import of this Hymn. And indeed this is the first time that the Name of *Messiah* (or *Anointed*) is found in Scripture : There being no such Word in all the foregoing Books of Moses, Joshua, the Judges, or Ruth. And therefore, it is the more to be remarked : This Prophe- tets being the first that mentions the *MESSIAH*, in this Song : With which the Song of the blessed Virgin hath such a perfect Resemblance, that one cannot but think Hannah had a respect to something higher than the Quarrel between her and Peninnah, and the Son which God had given her, or the great Acts of David : For the Words are too magnificent to be confined to so low a Sense. And therefore Kimchi upon these Words ingenuously acknowledges, *the King here mentioned is the MESSIAH ; of whom Hannah spake either by Prophecy or Tradition.* For there was a Tradition among them, that there should a great King arise in Israel : And she seals up this Song, with the Mention of that King, who should save them from all their Enemies.

It may be thus paraphrased.

1. Great is the Goodness of God to me, which makes my Heart leap for Joy ; great is the Honour he hath done me : So that my Mouth, which had nothing to answer when my Enemy upbraided me, now boasts of the Favour of God to me, who to my exceeding great Joy hath bestowed a Son upon me.

2. For the LORD is incomparable in all Perfections, which none have but himself alone : Whose Excellencies are so transcendent, that there is none

in whom we can find so secure a Sanctuary in all our Troubles, as we have in him.

3. Do not vaunt and brag therefore any more on this fashion, nor speak contemptuously of others : For as nothing can be hid from him ; so he knows how to bring to pass the strangest Things : Nor can any Man hinder, (let their Pride, and Confidence, and Power, be ever so great) but his Counsel shall stand.

4. The Strength of armed Forces is good for nothing, if not prospered by him : Who brings down those who were mighty Conquerors ; and advances those who were their miserable Slaves.

5. The Rich have been seen to fall into such Decay, as to want their necessary Food : And poor starved Wretches have come to great Plenty. As likewise barren Women, as I, have had a numerous Off-spring, and they that had many Children lost them all.

6. No Man can keep himself alive, when God calls him away from hence : And he unexpectedly restores Men to Life, when they were in the very Faws of Death.

7. It is according as he orders, that some Men are rich, others poor : And the very same Men who now are in a low Condition, he raises up to Greatness and Splendor ; and on the contrary, abaseth those that walk in Pride.

8. They that are in the most sordid plight, he advances when he pleases, to the most glorious State : For what can hinder him from shaking the very Foundations of the Earth, and overturning all things ; which are upheld and supported only by his Almighty Power ?

9. The best way therefore is, by Piety, to secure the Favour of God ; who by preserving all his faithful Servants from falling, will fill their Mouths with his Praises : But confound the Wicked, who now boast themselves, when with Amazement they are thrown down into a miserable Condition. For let not any Man be so vain as to imagine, that by his Strength he can maintain himself in his high Station ; or keep down good Men from rising up to Glory.

10. They that oppose God shall be broken in pieces ; he will strike a Terror into them, and make them fall flat before him. For it is he that is the Judge of the World ; and there is no Corner of it where Men can hide themselves from his Sentence. He will advance the King whom he shall chuse, even the LORD Christ ; and make him great in spite of all Opposers : Who shall not be able to hinder his Exaltation, or the Growth and Increase of his Kingdom.

Ver. 11. *And Elkanah went to Ramah to his House.]* When the Festival was ended.

And the Child did minister unto the LORD.] As soon as he was capable.

Before Eli the Priest.] According as he appointed him.

Ver. 12. *Now the Sons of Eli were Sons of Belial.]* Very wicked Men (see Deut. xiii. 13.) being impious, covetous, guilty of Violence, and filthy Lusts.

They knew not the LORD.] They were not professed Atheists ; but they minded not the Divine Service, nor took any care to do God honour ; being ignorant (as Kimchi expounds it) of his Law.

Ver.

Ver. 13. *And the Priest's Custom was, when any Man offered Sacrifice.]* Brought his Peace-Offerings to be offered at the Altar.

That the Priest's Servant came while the Flesh was seething, with a Flesh-hook of three Teeth in his Hand.] The Person who brought the Peace-Offerings having the largest Share in these Sacrifices, there were certain Rooms, when the Temple was built, both in the Court of the Women, and of the Men, wherein they had liberty to boil the Flesh, in order to feast with God at his own House : Which Christians afterward imitated in their *Feasts of Charity*. The like Rooms there were at the Tabernacle in the outward Court of it. See *L'Empereur*, in his *Annot. upon Codex Middoth, Cap. 2. Sect. 6. p. 80, 81.*

Ver. 14. *And he struck it into the Pan, or Kettle, or Cauldron, or Pot.]* There were several sorts of Vessels for this Use ; according as the Flesh to be boiled was little or much.

All that the Flesh-hook brought up, the Priest took for himself.] This was a new Custom, which they prophanely introduced : For not content with the Right Shoulder, and the Breast, which were theirs by the Law, (*Levit. vii. 32.*) they would take what they pleased of the rest, that belonged to the People : At least, so much as a Fork with three Teeth brought up, when they struck it into the Pot where the Flesh was boiling.

So they did in Shiloh unto all the Israelites that came thither.] This aggravated their Crime, that they made a constant Practice of it : And did not only on some Occasions commit such Wickedness.

Ver. 15. *And before they burnt the Fat.]* Which entirely belonged unto God, (*Levit. ii. 16. vii. 23, 25.*)

The Priest's Servant came and said to the Man that sacrificed, Give Flesh to roast for the Priest.] This was an high Contempt of God, to demand their Part before God had his. For the noblest Guests at Feasts were always served first.

For he will not have sodden Flesh of thee, but raw.] The Flesh-hook did not always bring up the best ; therefore as soon as the Sacrifice was cut up, they came and took the choicest Pieces.

Ver. 16. *And if any Man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the Fat presently, and then take as much as thy Soul desireth : Then he would answer ; Nay, but thou shalt give it me now ; if not, I will take it by Force.]* This argues the very Height of imperious Impiety ; that such submissive Language should not prevail with them, to have so much Respect to God, as to let him have his Portion in the first place : Though they offered the Priest more than his Share, after God was served. None knows to what pitch of Wickedness a Man may arrive, when once the Sense of God is extinguished, and gone out of his Mind.

Ver. 17. *Wherefore the Sin of the young Men was very great before the LORD.]* Having many grievous Aggravations.

For Men abhorred the Offering of the LORD.] Nothing brings Religion so much into the Contempt of the People, as the open Pro-

phaneness of those who are the Ministers of it.

Ver. 18. *But Samuel ministred before the LORD, being a Child.]* Though very young, yet he carefully performed such Offices at the Tabernacle, as he was capable to discharge : And did not follow the bad Example of his Familiars and Domesticks ; as we may suppose *Hophni* and *Phineas* were.

Girded with a Linnen Ephod.] We do not read any where of any peculiar Garments appointed for the *Levites* in their Ministration ; but only for the Priests ; and this was none of them, as appears from *Exod. xxviii. 40, 41.* And therefore the *Ephod* which the Priests are said to wear in Chap. xxii. of this Book, ver. 18. were quite different from the *Ephod* ordered in *Exod. xxviii.* for *Aaron* the High-Priest alone : Which had a curious Girdle belonging to it, and the Breast-plate with precious Stones inseparable from it ; and was wrought with Gold, and Blue and Purple, and Scarlet, *Exod. xxviii. 6.* But the *Ephod* which the Priests, or any other Persons are said to wear, is (for distinction sake) always called *Ephod bad*, an *Ephod made of fine Linnen* : Which was not a Sacred, but an Honorary Vestment, (as I may call it) being a short Garment hanging upon the Shoulders, down to the middle of the Back ; but without any Girdle or curious Work in it : which having some Likeness to that of the High-Priest's, was used by the inferior Priests, to make them more respected as special Ministers of God ; and by other great Persons, upon some solemn Occasion, as *David* did, *2 Sam. vi. 24.* And *Eli* (seeing such a great Appearance of God in him) ordered *Samuel* to do ; though it was not a Habit appertaining to the *Levites* ; much less to him who was not of Age, according to the exact Rules of the Law to serve in the Tabernacle. Thus *Kimchi* and *Rabag* understand it. And the LXX, in *2 Sam. vi. 15.* translate it *εὐχάλλον*, an *eximious Garment*. See *Jo. Braunius de Vest. Sacerd. L. 2. Cap. vi. p. 602.*

It seems no improbable Conjecture of *Fortunatus Scacchus*, That from hence was derived the *Latus Clavus* among the Romans, which was a Vestment proper to their Senators and Presidents. It was first brought from the *He-truscans*, by *Tullus Hostilius*, when he conquer'd them : Whose ancient Language agrees so much with the Hebrew, that one may well think they had many things from them. See *Myrothec. Cap. iii. 43.*

Ver. 19. *Moreover, his Mother made him a little Coat, and brought it to him from Year to Year, when she came up with her Husband to offer the yearly Sacrifice.]* The *Ephod* being used, I suppose, only in the Service of God, it was provided at the publick Charge. But for his ordinary wearing, *Hannab* took care, at her Charge, to provide him a Coat, and other things, it is likely, suitable to it ; that she might still express her Piety in contributing to his Maintenance at the House of God. And it is very probable, that this little Coat was woven with her own Hands ; as the ancient Tradition s, that Christ's Seamless Coat was woven by the blessed Virgin. And so in *Joma* the Doctors say, (*Cap. iii.*) that a Priest might use a Garment

ment in his Ministry, which was made by his Mother. See *Braunius* L. i. Cap. xvii.

Ver. 20. *And Eli blessed Elkanah and Hannah his Wife, and said, The LORD give thee seed of this woman, for the loan which is lent unto the LORD.*] He gave them this Benediction by a divine Suggestion; and thereby verified what she utter'd in her Prophetical Song, ver. 5.

And they went to their own home.] Their Affection to their Son did not make them stay there, and neglect their Domestick Affairs.

Ver. 21. *And the LORD visited Hannah, so that she conceived and bare three sons, and two Daughters.*] None are Losers, by what they lend unto the LORD.

And the Child Samuel grew before the LORD.] Not only in Stature, but in Wisdom also and Virtue: See ver. 26. Of so great moment it is to season the Minds of Children early with a sense of God and of Religion: Which is likely to continue with them, and improve, as they grow in Years.

Ver. 22. *Now Eli was very old.*] Which made him listless and unactive.

And heard all that his Sons did unto all Israel.] Yet wanted not Information of all the fore-mentioned enormous Practices of his Sons.

And how they lay with the Women that assembled.] Whose Impiety and Luxury proceeded so far, as to move them to debauch those Women who came to worship God. Of the word *assembled*, see *Exod.* xxviii. 8. Unto which may be added, that the *Hebrew* word *Tzaba* signifies not only a great many gathered together, but also a *Station*: That is, stated times of attendance, which devout Women observed for Fasting and Prayer. For that was their Business at the Temple; unto which they resorted at certain Times for these ends.

At the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation.] These words sound as if they committed this Lewdness in the presence of all the People. But such Bestiality would not have been suffered; and therefore this refers to their *assembling* at the Door of the Tabernacle: From whence they led them to some private Room about the Tabernacle, (as there were many afterward about the Temple) where they defiled them.

Ver. 23. *And he said unto them, Why do you these things?*] Before mentioned, ver. 14, 15, 16, 22.

For I hear of your evil doings by all this people.] Their Wickedness was so notorious, that there was a general Complaint of it; which should have moved him to greater Severity, than merely to reprove and chide them with such Gentleness and Lenity, as these and the following Words import. Which proceeded partly from the Coldness of Old Age; partly from his too great Indulgence to his Children; and partly (as *Corn. Benavent. Bertram* conjectures) from his being more intent upon the Defence of their Civil Liberties, than the restoring Ecclesiastical Discipline.

Ver. 24. *Nay, my Sons, it is no good report that I hear; ye make the LORD's people to transgress.*] By making them neglect and despise the Service of God, ver. 17. and tempting them to Lewdness, ver. 22. This is the

Language of a tender *Father*, not of a zealous *Judge*; who ought to have passed a publick Censure upon them, for their publick Crimes, by turning them out of their Office, or some sharp Punishment; which his Office gave him Authority and Power to inflict upon such infamous Offenders.

Ver. 25. *If a man sin against another, the Judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him?*] If one Neighbour do an Injury to another, the Business may be composed by the Judge; who interposing his Authority, either takes up the difference, or sees the Person satisfied who was offended. But if one injure the Judge himself, (which was the present Case) who shall take the confidence to speak in his behalf? Was it ever heard, that any one interceded for a Man to his Prince, when he intended to kill the Prince himself? *Eli* argued well; but he should not have referred their Punishment unto God, when it was in his power to punish them himself.

Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father; because the LORD would slay them.] The words may be render'd out of the *Hebrew* *But they would not hearken to the voice of their father; therefore the LORD resolved to slay them.*] But according to our Translation, the Sense is right enough: For when Men have long sinned grievously against many Admonitions (which it may be supposed their Father had given them) whereby they became incurable; God deprives them of that prudent Consideration and Discretion, which would save them from Destruction. So *Rasi* upon these words, *The Sentence of Judgment was already sealed against them.*

Ver. 26. *And the Child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD and with men.*] The words in the *Hebrew* are, *he went on, or grew great and tall, and was good*, that is, acceptable, *both to God and Men*. The meaning is, he made a great Progress in Wisdom and Goodness, as well as increased in Stature: So that God was well pleased with him, and he was well esteemed by the People. The same is said of our Saviour, *Luke* ii. 52. where *Theophylact* thus glosses, *Ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τῷ Θεῷ ἐλάττειτο, καὶ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐπαινετο*; i. e. *He did those things that were well-pleasing to God, and were praised by Men.*

Ver. 27. *And there came a Man of God unto Eli.*] That is, a Prophet who was divinely inspired, to deliver the following Message to him. Some say this was *Phineas*, others *Elkanah*; without any ground.

And said unto him, Thus saith the LORD.] This is the constant Language of Prophets.

Did I plainly appear.] In the *Hebrew*, *Manifestly reveal my self.*

Unto the House of thy Fathers.] Unto *Aaron*, who was the Head of the Family of Priests. See *Exod.* iv. 27.

When they were in Egypt, in Pharaoh's house?] In miserable Bondage. As much as to say, Have I conferred such Favours upon you, and do you thus requite me? It is the way of the Prophets, when they call Men to repentance, to aggravate their Sins by an enumeration of God's

great Benefits unto them. See *Isaiab* i. 2, &c. and *Micah* vi. 3, 4, 5.

Ver. 28. *And did I chuse him out of all the Tribes of Israel, to be my Priest?*] The highest Dignity in the Nation.

To offer upon mine Altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me.] These were the several parts of the Priest's Office: And the last contains the greatest of them all, which belonged only to the High Priest; who alone appeared before God to consult him by *Urim* and *Tummim*, when he wore the Golden Ephod, with the Breast-plate annexed to it: For they were inseparable, *Exod.* xxviii. 6, 12, 28.

And did I give unto the House of thy Fathers, all the Offerings made by fire of the children of Israel?] There were none of the Sacrifices offered at the Altar, of which the Priest had not some Share, (see *Numb.* xviii. 8, 9, 10, &c.) For even of the Burnt-offerings, which were wholly consumed on the Altar, the Skin was by an express Law given to the Priest, *Lev.* vii. 8.

Ver. 29. *Wherefore kick ye at my Sacrifice, and at my Offerings which I have commanded in my Habitation?* As refractory Oxen were wont to do, when they were prick'd with a Goad, to stir them up to work at the Plough: Which signifies the highest Irreverence and Contempt of God's Authority. See *Bochart* in his *Hiero-zoicon*, P. i. Lib. 2. Cap. xxix. latter end.

And honourest thy Sons above me, &c.] By suffering them to continue in the Priest's Office, and prophanely to feast themselves with the best of the Sacrifices before God was served.

Ver. 30. *Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed, that thy House, and the House of thy father, should walk before me for ever; but now, saith the LORD, be it far from me.*] God revokes the Decree he had made in favour of him and his Family, of being High-Priests throughout all Generations. Which Office was first settled upon *Eleazar*, the eldest Son of *Aaron*, and upon his Posterity, for the very same Promise is made to *Phineas* the Son of *Eleazar*, (*Numb.* xxv. 15.) which is here said to be made to *Eli*, who was descended from *Ithamar*, the youngest Son of *Aaron*: Unto whom the High-Priesthood was translated from the Family of *Eleazar*, for some Sin or other: As now it was resolved it should be translated back again from the Family of *Ithamar* to that of *Eleazar*; because of the horrid Sins of the Sons of *Eli*. For what Cause *Phineas* or his Posterity, (for there are various Opinions about the time) lost the Priesthood; and how they recovered it in the time of *David*: See *Mr. Selden* L. i. de *Success. ad Pontificat.* Cap. 2, 3. And *Constant. L'Empereur*, in his Annot. on *Bertram de Repub. Jud.* p. 411. Some think, that after *Phineas*, those three Persons mentioned in *1 Chron.* vi. 45. *Abishua*, *Bukki*, and *Uzzi*, succeeded in the Priesthood; and then came in *Eli*: But of this there is no certainty. *Procopius Gazæus* here observes, that this Verse, *Latenter totius Judaici Sacerdotii finem innuit*; doth secretly intimate the abolishing of the whole Jewish Priesthood. For this Promise, saith he, *Thy House and the House of thy Father, shall walk before me for ever*; was not made to *Ithamar*, but to *Aaron*: And therefore he shews here what should befall the whole Tribe. Such

conditional Decrees are frequent in Scripture; particularly in *Jerem.* xviii. 7, 8, 9, 10.

For he that honoureth me, I will honour; and he that despiseth me, shall be lightly esteemed.] A remarkable Instance of which we have in the Records of the Christian Church: For *Eusebius* tells us in the time of that Persecution which he mentions in the Eighth Book of his *Ecclesiastical History*, some of the Pastors of the Church, who had not governed the Flock of Christ as they ought to have done, were condemned to be Keepers of Camels, and of the Emperor's Horses, (a Punishment among the Romans in those Days, as *Valesius* observes) ἡ δὲ θεῖα καταχρῖσθαι δύν, &c. The divine Justice judging them worthy of no better Employment. Cap. xii. de *Martyribus Palestinæ*.

Ver. 31. *Behold the Days come, that I will cut off the Arm of thy Father's House.*] Our Arm being the Instrument whereby we perform all things; this Threatning signifies, that not long hence God would utterly take away all Power and Authority from him, and from his Family; both as he was a Priest, and as he was a Judge.

That there shall not be an old man in thy House.] But his Posterity shall die, as it follows, ver. 33. in the flower of their age, which was accounted a great Judgment in that Nation. So *Menasab Ben Israel*, who observes in his Book *de Termino Vitæ*, p. 87. that the *Gemara* upon *Jebamoth* mentions a certain Family in *Jerusalem*, none of which commonly lived above eighteen Years. Of which they enquiring the Reason of *R. Johanan Ben Zachæi*, he bad them search, if they were not of the Family of *Eli*, upon which God had passed this Sentence, that they should die in the flower of their age: And it was discovered that they sprang from him.

Ver. 32. *And thou shalt see an enemy in my Sanctuary.*] The Marginal Translation seems most literal, *Thou shalt see the affliction of the Tabernacle*. As he did, for he saw the Tabernacle deprived of the Ark, which was the Glory of it; and lived to hear the Ark was taken by the *Philistines*, iv. 4, 11. But his Family was not thrown out of the Priesthood, till the Days of *Solomon*.

In all the wealth which God shall give Israel.] The Hebrew words may be translated, *After all the good God hath done to Israel*.

And there shall not be an old man in thy House for ever.] He repeats the foregoing Threatning, to shew the certainty of it. But some by an old man understand an Elder. So the *Talmudists* in the *Gemara* of the *Sanhedrim*, Cap. i. where they make the meaning to be, that if any of his Family did live long, they should never come to Honour. For so they tell the Story, that *R. Johanan* missing of some Preferment that was designed and endeavoured for him, and taking it very heavily, the Doctors that were his Relations, prayed him not to be troubled; for we are (said they) of the Family of *Eli*, of whom it is said, *There shall be no old man of thy house for ever*; that is, None be promoted to any Dignity.

Ver. 33. *And the man of thine whom I shall not cut off from my Altar, shall be to consume thy eyes, and to grieve thy heart.*] It was not a Favour to let any of them live; but a Punishment to those who were

were grieved to see the High-Priesthood taken from their Family, and those that belonged to it reduced to great Poverty. It is usual in Scripture, to say that of the Parents, which properly belongs to their Posterity.

And all the Increase of thy House shall die in the flower of their age.] This doth not belong to all the Posterity of *Ithamar*, but only to the Family of *Eli*.

Ver. 34. *And this shall be a Sign to thee, that shall come upon thy two Sons, Hophni and Phineas, that in one day they shall die both of them.]* See iv. 11, 17.

Ver. 35. *And I will raise me up a faithful Priest, that shall do all that is in my heart, and in my mind.]* This seems to be meant of *Zadock*, who was anointed in the room of *Abiathar*, 1 Chron. xxix. 22.

And I will build him a sure House.] The High-Priesthood continued in his Line till the Captivity of *Babylon*, as appears from *Ezek.* xl. 16. and a long time after it, as *Josephus* shews, *Lib. x. Cap. 4.* And our famous *Selden*, *Lib. 1. de Success. in Pontif. Cap. 5, 6.* where he shows their perpetual Succession till the time of *Antiochus Epiphanes*. But *Procopius Gazæus* here notes, that tho' this, according to the History, is meant of *Zadock*, who was put into the Priesthood by *Solomon*, and in whose Line it continued; yet it belongs to none in the highest Sense, but to our LORD Jesus Christ, who offered himself to the Father for us, and is our great High-Priest for ever.

And he shall walk before mine Anointed for ever.] By the *Anointed* of God is here meant the King; for whom the High-Priest consulted God on great Occasions: And therefore is said to *walk before him*; because he directed him in his Proceedings, and showed him what he ought to do, in all difficult Cases.

Ver. 36. *And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left in thy House.]* The remainder of his Family who were not cut off.

Shall come and crouch to him for a piece of Silver, and for a morsel of Bread.] The Hebrew Word which we translate *crouch*, signifying to bow and to worship, the *Vulgar* understands these Words, as if they were spoken not of their coming to beg of the High-Priest; but to pray to God in so poor a Condition, as not to be able to bring more than a Farthing, or Mite, to the Treasury; and nothing but a Bit of Bread, (not so much as a Bird, much less a Sheep or Bullock) for a Sin-offering. But the *Chaldee* takes the Word as we do, for humbling himself to the Priest before mentioned, begging a small Relief of his great Poverty, to which he was reduced. The Hebrew Word for a piece of Silver is *Agorab*, which signifies a minute piece of Silver, in the very derivation of the Word, as many think. So the meaning is, he should humbly beg, tho' ever so small a Relief.

Put me, I pray thee, into one of the Priests Offices, that I may eat a piece of bread.] Begging of the High Priest that he might enjoy the meanest Pension that was allowed to those Priests who were prohibited to officiate. For so the Words may be translated, *Somewhat belonging to the Priesthood.* See 2 Kings xxiii. 9.

Ezek. xlv. 13. This seems to have been fulfilled in the days of *Abiathar*, who for Treason was not only put out of his Office, but sent to live upon his own Farm in the Country; and not suffered to live upon the Portion given to Priests at the Temple, 1 Kings ii. 26, 27. By this means his Posterity fell into extream want; in which the just Judgment of God may be observed; that the Children of those who were so wanton, that they would not be content unless they had the choicest parts of the Sacrifice for their portion, should fall into so low a Condition, as to beg their Bread.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *AND the Child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli.]* Performed such Services at the Tabernacle as *Eli* directed, being now about twelve Years old, as *Josephus* thinks.

And the word of the LORD was precious in those days.] God did very rarely in those days reveal his Mind to any Person. See ver. 21.

There was no open Vision.] Here *Vision* includes all the ways whereby God revealed himself to Men. Which he did then so seldom, that whatsoever Revelation there might be privately to some pious Persons, there was none then publicly acknowledged to be a Prophet; unto whom the People might resort to know the Mind of God. Which was the Cause that *Samuel* being twice called by God to attend unto him, thought it had been *Eli* who called him: For they were so unacquainted in these days with the prophetic Spirit, that we read of no more than two Prophets in all the days of the Judges, iv. 4. vi. 8.

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass at that time.]* After the Man of God mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, (ver. 27.) had been with *Eli*; perhaps that very Night after he had delivered his Message.

When Eli was laid down.] To sleep.

In his place.] In the Court of the Tabernacle, where there were divers Rooms for several uses of the Priests; as there were afterwards at the Temple.

And his Eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see.] Clearly to do his Duty, after it grew duskish: Which made him, it is likely, go to bed betimes, and leave Directions with *Samuel* what to do, 'till it was time for him to repose himself. And this might be the reason that *Samuel* ran so hastily to him, when he thought he call'd for him, that he might know what he wanted; Men of his Age, and dim-sighted, being less able to help themselves.

Ver. 3. *And e'er the Lamp of God went out in the Temple of the LORD, where the Ark of God was.]* The Lamp in the great Shaft of the Golden Candlestick, which bent towards the most holy place (called the *Western Lamp*) never went out; but some other of them did go out, when it was morning. See upon *Exod.* xxvii. 20, 21. The meaning therefore is, that e'er it was day, the LORD called *Samuel*. See Dr. *Lightfoot* of the Temple, chap. xiv. §. 4.

And Samuel was lain down to sleep.] In the Court of the Levites, as the Targum explains it; or in some other place near to Eli, that he might be ready to assist him on any occasion. The Words seem to import, that he had watched most of the Night, (for so some were to do, *Psalms* cxxxiv. 1.) and towards Morning went to repose himself. For thus the Words run in the Hebrew, and in the LXX, and Vulgar: *Before the Lamp of God went out, and Samuel lay down to sleep in the Temple of the LORD, &c.* Infomuch that *Victorinus Strigelius* translates the Words thus, *And Samuel went to lie down in the Temple of the LORD, where the Ark of God was, before the Lamp of God went out.*

Ver. 4. *And the LORD called Samuel.]* Out of the most holy place. So the Targum, *A Voice was heard out of the Temple of the LORD.*

And he said, Here am I.] It is likely Eli lay nearer the Tabernacle than Samuel did, and yet heard nothing: But the Voice passing him by, was directed to Samuel, who alone heard it. These Words, *Here am I*, are a Form of Speech, signifying Attention to what was said, and Readiness to do what should be commanded.

Ver. 5. *And he ran unto Eli and said, Here am I, for thou calledst me.]* He thought Eli had some Ministry wherein to employ him, and therefore started up presently, and ran to know what his Pleasure was. Which shows the great readiness and promptness of his Obedience; which made him come, yea run at his first Call.

And he said, I called not, lie down again: and he went and lay down.] He thought he might dream.

Ver. 6. *And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel rose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I, for thou didst call me, &c.]* He was sure there was no body yet come to the Temple; it being Night, and the Doors shut; and therefore concluded it could be none but Eli that called him: And it is probable, the Voice was like that of Eli's.

Ver. 7. *Now Samuel did not know the LORD.]* He had not yet learned to know Discipline from before the LORD; as the Targum interprets it: That is, how God was wont to teach and instruct Men in his Will: Which the next Words explain.

Neither was the Word of the LORD yet revealed unto him.] He was unacquainted with the way, wherein God made known his Mind unto the Prophets; because he had never spoken to him before: So that he did not know how to distinguish between the Voice of God, and of a Man. *Maimonides* expounds it, he did not understand that the LORD was wont to speak with a soft, whispering Voice; which was therefore called *Bath-col*.

Ver. 8. *And the LORD called Samuel again the third time; and he rose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I, for thou didst call me: And Eli perceived that the LORD had called the Child.]* This repetition of the Voice so oft, awakened Eli to think that this was no Fancy of the Child's; and therefore since he knew that he did not call him, he concluded the LORD did; and by this means he was disposed to give credit to what Samuel should tell him, as an Oracle of God.

Ver. 9. *Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go lie down; and it shall be if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak LORD, for thy Servant heareth.]* He tells him, in effect, that it was the Voice of God which he heard; and instructs him how to behave himself, when he called again; and to answer, that he was ready to perform whatever he commanded.

So Samuel went and lay down in his place.] Which was not far, as I said, from the place where Eli lay.

Ver. 10. *And the LORD came and stood.]* This Word *stood* (*Kimchi* thinks) denoteth some glorious appearance of God to him; because this is the same Word which is used in *Numb.* xxii. 22, 23, 31. where the Angel is said to stand to oppose Balaam's Proceedings. And so the Targum, *The LORD was revealed, and stood and called, &c.*

And called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel.] Only he repeats his Name, to move the greater Attention.

Then Samuel answered, Speak, for thy Servant heareth.] He omits the Name of the LORD, in his Answer which Eli directed him to make: Either out of fear, or uncertainty, whether it was the LORD that spake to him, or no.

Ver. 11. *And the LORD said unto Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the Ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.]* Which in our Language we express thus, *It shall stun all that hear it*: As a Man is, when a clap of terrible Thunder strikes his Ears, which even deafens him, so that he can hear nothing else. This was fulfilled, when the doleful News came, that the Ark was taken, and both Eli's Sons slain, and he fell down and brake his Neck, &c.

Ver. 12. *In that Day I will perform against Eli all the things that I have spoken concerning his House.]* By the Man of God in the foregoing Chapter.

When I begin, I will also make an end.] He doth not mean, that he would begin and make an end at once; but that he would persevere in his Punishments, and not desist when he began, till all his Threatnings were fulfilled, viz. in the Death of Eli, and of his Sons; and the slaughter of Eighty-five Priests of this Family by Doeg, and the thrusting Abiathar (who escaped that Slaughter) out of his Office, and so depriving that Family of its Dignity and Honour.

Ver. 13. *For I have told him, that I will judge his House for ever, for the Iniquity which he knoweth.]* For he could not be ignorant of the Crimes committed so publicly; and of which there was such a general Complaint.

Because his Sons made themselves vile.] Or, they made light of God and of his People; having no regard to either of them. Or, they made the Service of God vile in the Eyes of the People; as the Words may be translated, and as the LXX understand them.

And he restrained them not.] He did not frown upon them, as it is in the Hebrew. Which doth not signify, that he shewed no sign of displeasure against their wickedness, (for he did chide them, tho' too gently, for it,) but he did not severely reprove them; and when that would

not restrain them, turn them out of their Office, or suspend them 'till they were reformed. For which cause God passed this severe Sentence upon the whole Family; that they should lose the Dignity of the High-Priesthood, and be made as vile and contemptible as they had rendered God's Service.

Ver. 14. *And therefore I have sworn unto the House of Eli, that the Iniquity of Eli's House shall not be purged with Sacrifice, nor Offering for ever.]* By Iniquity is meant the Punishment of Iniquity; which he threatens should not be removed, or mitigated, by any sort of Sacrifices, or Oblations, that could be brought to the Altar: But only (as the *Gemara* upon *Rosh Hashanah* ventures to say) by the Law, and by the Retributions of the Saints. By the Law they mean not merely the Study of the Law, but the Practice of it, by observing God's Commands: And by Retributions of the Saints, Works of Charity, Bounty, and Liberality, beyond what the Divine Law required. See Dr. *Windet, de Vita funtorum statu*, p. 193.

Ver. 15. *And Samuel lay down until the Morning, and opened the Door of the House of the LORD.]* This was one of the Works of the Levites, to open and shut the Door of the Court of the LORD's House.

And Samuel feared to shew Eli the Vision.] Having no Command from God to do it; and being loth to grieve the old Man by telling him bad News.

Ver. 16. *Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my Son; and he answered, Here am I.]* The old Man being so solemnly threatned by the late Message from God to him; was afraid he was concerned in what the LORD had now said to Samuel.

Ver. 17. *And he said, What is the thing that the LORD hath said unto thee; I pray thee hide it not from me: God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide any thing from me, &c.]* He adjures him to declare to him all that he had heard, and conceal nothing; which obliged him to satisfy his desire, as *Micaiah* and our blessed Saviour did in the like Case.

Ver. 18. *And Samuel told him every thing, and hid nothing from him: And he said, It is the LORD, let him do what seemeth him good.]* This Sentence being denounced by a Child, who had his dependance upon *Eli*, far from any Secular Cunning, being unable to discern between the Voice of the LORD, and the Voice of his Tutor, 'till he instructed him; was a great deal more terrible to *Eli* than the Message of the Prophet had been, and wrought a greater Effect upon him. For he humbly acknowledged the Justice of God, and submitted to his Sentence (as many of the Fathers think) with a truly penitent Heart. For now he knew (as our Dr. *Jackson* observes) that the Sentence was irreverfible, being confirmed by an Oath, (ver. 14.) And the Humility and Modesty of *Eli's* Answer, perswaded that excellent Person, that the fearful Sentence denounced against him, extended no further, than to the irreverfible deposition of him and his Family from the Priesthood, unto a poor and mean Estate, wherein they were to live hereafter. *Consecration of the Son of God*, chap. xviii. parag. 5.

Ver. 19. *And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him.]* There were manifest Tokens that God favoured him, as he did *Joseph*, Gen. xxxi. 2. The *Targum* hath it *MEMRA*, the Word of the LORD was his help: Or he revealed more and more of his Mind to him: so that *Israel* knew God intended him for the Office mentioned in the next Verse.

And did let none of his Words fall to the ground.] A Metaphor from Arrows shot out of a Bow, which hit the Mark. And they may refer either to the Words of Samuel, or of God; which is the same. This proved him to be a Prophet, or a Man divinely inspired.

Ver. 20. *And all Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba.]* The whole Country of *Judea*. See *Judg.* xx. 1.

Knew that Samuel was established to be a Prophet of the LORD.] Settled to be a constant Prophet, who supplied the want of *Urim* and *Thummim*, when the Ark was taken from them.

Ver. 21. *And the LORD appeared again in Shiloh; for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh, by the word of the LORD.]* Having begun to appear in *Shiloh*, he continued this great Favour: For he revealed himself to Samuel, not by Dreams and Visions, but by speaking to him in an audible Voice, as he had done, ver. 4, &c. And indeed he seems to have been the first Prophet, that was raised up to be a publick Instructor and Governour of God's People. Others there had been before him; but not with so high an Authority, and publick Approbation. And therefore St. *Peter* saith, (*Acts* iii.) *All the Prophets from Samuel spake of those Days*: As if he was the first eminent Prophet whom the LORD raised up to them after *Moses*.

C H A P. IV.

Ver. 1. *AND the word of Samuel came unto all Israel.]* The Revelation of God's Mind and Will, which had been very scarce among them in former Days, (iii. 1.) now grew very plentiful: For as Samuel himself was ready to instruct every one that came to him; so he set up Colleges of the Prophets (as we read in the following parts of this Book) who in time were settled in divers parts of the Country, for the better preserving and spreading the Knowledge of God among the People, x. 5. xix. 18, 19, 20, &c. Which made *Abarbinel* discourse on this manner, upon the foregoing Words; *In the days of Eli the Word of the LORD was scarce, and Vision was seldom: But when Samuel appeared, not only he prophesied frequently, but many of the Israelites, by his means were endued with the same Spirit, according to these Words, and the LORD appeared more frequently in Shiloh, (so he understands them) because the LORD was revealed to Samuel in Shiloh. Which signifies, that the Influence of the Spirit which descended upon Samuel in Shiloh reached unto others, because of its abundance, who were disposed to receive it: so that they also prophesied.*

And Israel went out against the Philistines to battel.] This was in the middle of that Forty Years

Years Dominion that the *Philistines* had over the *Israelites*, mentioned *Judges* xiii. 1. unto which they were encouraged, perhaps, by the Death of the Lords of the *Philistines*; and the great Slaughter which *Sampson* had made of them at his Death, *Judges* xvi. 27, 30.

And pitched besides Eben-ezer.] Thus this place was called when this Book was written; and so denominated from the famous Battel which *Samuel* fought with the *Philistines*, twenty Years after this, vii. 12.

And the Philistines pitched in Aphek.] In a place in the Tribe of *Judah*, as we read *Josh.* xv. 53. upon the Confines of the *Philistines* Country. But see xxix. 1. of this Book.

Ver. 2. *And the Philistines put themselves in array against Israel; and when they joined battel, Israel was smitten before the Philistines, &c.*] Tho' *Samuel* was established a Prophet, and it was so publickly known, that all *Israel* came to consult with him (as the foregoing Verse seems to import) yet the *Elders* did not take his Advice about this War; as *Rabbag* thinks. Whose Opinion is more probable than theirs, who think they did advise with him, and that he had them fight, on purpose that the Sentence upon *Eli's* Sons might be fulfilled.

Ver. 3. *And when the People were come into the Camp, the Elders of Israel said, Wherefore hath the LORD smitten us to-day before the Philistines.*] They thought the Justice of their Cause was sufficient to entitle them to the Favour of God, tho' they themselves were wicked. Thus *Brutus* cried when he fell, O *Jupiter*! *what is the Cause of so great Calamity?* Not reflecting upon his horrible Exactions in *Cyprus*; and his great Ingratitude to *Cæsar*, whom he slew in the Senate.

Let us fetch the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh, that when it comes among us, it may save us out of the hands of our Enemies.] This was as foolish as the other, to confide in God's Help, when they lived in open Disobedience to him.

Ver. 4. *So the People sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD.*] This being done without any Warrant from God, provoked him, rather than procured his Presence with them. But they seem to have done it in imitation of *Jeshua* marching with the Ark against *Jericho*: For which he had a Divine Authority, but they had none. *Strigelius* therefore well applies to this the Observation of *Polybius*, That many not studying to imitate the Lives of excellent Men, but only some of their extraordinary Actions, have done nothing but expose their own Folly to the World.

Which dwelleth between the Cherubims.] Or, upon the *Cherubims*, as the *Chaldee*, the LXX, and the *Vulgar* here translate it. But *Lud. De Dieu* is not satisfied with this Sense; for he thinks the Divine Majesty did not fit upon the Wings of the *Cherubims*, but under them; in the Space between them and the Ark, which was his Footstool: And therefore he translates these words, *Who inhabiteth the Cherubims*; which were as a Canopy over the SCHECHINAH. But I have followed the ancient Translation, in my Notes upon *Exod.* xxv. 22.

And the two Sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, were there with the Ark of the Covenant of God.] Which they were ordered to bring out of its Place (into which the *Levites* might not enter) and to accompany it unto the Army.

Ver. 5. *And when the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD came into the Camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout.*] As if they had already gotten the Victory.

So that the Earth rang again.] It was so loud, that it might be heard a great way off. See 1 *Kings* i. 40. and what I have noted there.

Ver. 6. *And when the Philistines heard the Noise of the shout, they said, What means the Noise of this great shout in the Camp of the Hebrews? And they understood that the Ark of the LORD was come into the Camp.*] They sent to get Intelligence; or were informed of it by some Deferters.

Ver. 7. *And the Philistines were afraid, for they said, God is come into the Camp.*] The Symbol of God's Presence; which perhaps they imagined the *Israelites* worshipped as their God.

And they said, Wo unto us, for there hath not been such a thing heretofore.] In all the Battels that they or their Neighbours had fought with the *Israelites*, they never heard of such a thing as this; which they thought must produce some extraordinary effect.

Ver. 8. *Wo unto us, who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods?*] They fought with Men before, but now with God, before whom none could stand. The Hebrew Words *Adirim Elohim*, which we translate mighty Gods, are translated by *Theodoret*, the strong God: Which agrees with what goes before, *God is come into the camp*: And with the Targum, *Who shall deliver us out of the Hand of the WORD of the LORD, &c.*

These are the Gods.] Or, *this is the God.*

That smote Egypt with all the Plagues in the Wilderness.] They seem not to have perfectly understood the sacred Story; but thought all those Plagues which are there spoken of, had fallen on the *Egyptians*, while the *Israelites* were in the Wilderness; where they were when their last Plague befel them, by their being drowned in the Red Sea: But *Jonathan* thus paraphrases it, *Who smote the Egyptians with all manner of Plagues; and did wonders for his people in the desert.*

Ver. 9. *Be strong, and quit your selves like Men, ye Philistines.*] These Words were spoken by their Great Commanders; as the foregoing Words, in all likelihood were: who understood what had been done in Foreign Countries.

That ye be not Servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been to you: Quit your selves like Men, and fight.] When they were recovered out of the Fright, which seized on them at first, they considered, that notwithstanding the Power of their God, they had made the *Israelites* subject to them, and also overthrown them in a late Battel: And therefore their present danger should only raise their Courage, and make them fight more valiantly.

Ver. 10. *And the Philistines fought.*] They gave Battel to the *Israelites*.

And the Israelites were smitten, and they fled every Man unto his Tent.] They were so routed, that

that they did not flee to their Camp, with an intent to renew the Fight (as they did before, *ver. 3.*) but dispersed themselves to their own home. And hitherto many of them dwelt in Tents, as I observed before: See *Josh. xxii. 14. Judges vii. 8. xx. 8.*

And there was a great slaughter; for there fell of Israel thirty thousand Footmen.] There fell but four thousand in the former Battel, before the Ark came among them, *ver. 2.* so little did the bare Presence of the Ark profit wicked Men, that it rather did them hurt.

Ver. 11. And the Ark of God was taken, and the two Sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, were slain.] It is likely that (as *Josephus* saith) *Eli* parted with the Ark from the Tabernacle very unwillingly; but when he could not help it, he charged his Sons, who went along with it, to lose their Lives rather than lose it.

Ver. 12. And there ran a Man of Benjamin out of the Army, and came to Shiloh the same day.] Some of the Jews have a fancy that this Man was *Saul*: For no other reason that I can find, but because he was of that Tribe, and a proper Man, who, it is likely, could run swiftly. How far *Shiloh* was from *Aphek*, or from *Eben-ezer* (both which were in the Tribe of *Judah*, as *Shiloh* was in *Ephraim*) near to which this Battle was fought, is not certain; but not so distant, but that a Man might run the same day from the one to the other.

With his Clothes rent, and with earth upon his head.] According to the manner of those who bewailed any great Calamity. *Josh. vii. 6. Job ii. 12. Ezek. xxvii. 30.* From which last Places it appears, it was a Custom among other Nations. And is most lively expressed by *Virgil* in *Aeneid. xii. ver. 609, 610, 611.* where *Latinus* is represented as rending his Clothes, and throwing dust upon his grey Hairs, when he lamented his private and the publick Losses. *Tiracuellus* hath heaped up a great many Examples of this, in his Annotations on *Alex. ab Alexandro*, lib. 3. cap. 7.

Ver. 13. And when he came, lo, Eli sat upon a seat by the way-side, for his heart trembled for the Ark of God.] He had caused a Seat, I suppose, to be set for him, by the side of the Gate that entred into the City, (*ver. 18.*) that he might hearken after News; being extremely concerned, above all things, for the Ark of the Covenant of God.

And when the man came into the City.] He passed by *Eli*, and said not a word to him, tho' he saw him sitting there; because he was loth he should be surpris'd with such sad Tidings. Or, perhaps, he came into the City at some other Gate.

And told it, all the City cried out.] Looking upon themselves as put out of the Divine Protection, because they had lost the Symbol of his Presence; and the Book of the Covenant, the Blessings of which they could no longer claim.

Ver. 14. And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he said, What means the noise of this tumult? And the man came in hastily and told Eli.] They about him had not the heart to resolve his Question, but brought the Man speedily to acquaint him with the Truth.

Ver. 15. Now Eli was ninety eight years old, and his Eyes were dim, that he could not see.] He was not able to discern the Sadness that was in the Peoples Countenances; but only heard their Shrieks and Lamentations:

Ver. 16. And the Man said, I am he that came out of the Army, and I fled to-day out of the Army.] The Man represents himself as an Eye-witness of what had passed, that he might gain the more Credit to what he said: And adds; that he brought the freshest News.

And he said, What is there done; my Son?] He ask'd if they had fought; and with what Success.

Ver. 17. And the Messenger answered and said; Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath also been a great slaughter among the people; and thy two sons Hophni and Phineas are dead; and the Ark of God is taken.] He hid nothing from him; but reserved the worst News 'till the last.

Ver. 18. And it came to pass when he made mention of the Ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward, by the side of the gate.] At the Entrance of the City, where his Chair was set.

And his neck brake, and he died.] Tho' he was too indulgent a Father, yet he was highly commendable in this, that he was not so much affected with the loss of his Sons, and the Slaughter of the People, as with the loss of the Ark of God. For he kept up his Courage, and did not fall, 'till he heard that mentioned. The more publick any Concern is, the more it is laid to heart by Men of worthy Spirits. Such an one was *Eli*, with whom God was angry upon his Sons account; otherwise he was adorned with many Virtues, as *Procopius Gazæus* observes.

For he was an old Man and heavy.] Being oppressed with Grief, he swooned away; and being both very old, and very unwieldy, his Fall was the more dangerous, and the *Vertebrae* of his Neck the more easily displaced.

And he judged Israel forty years.] This aggravated the Calamity of his Family, that having been so long in the highest Station, it fell into great Afflictions in a moment. See upon Chapter the first, *ver. 9.* The Jews observe in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. 13. that on the day he died, God forsook the Tabernacle in *Shiloh*, having delivered his strength into captivity, &c. *Psal. lxxviii. 60, 61.*

Ver. 19. And his Daughter-in-law, Phineas's wife, was with child, near to be delivered; and when she heard the tidings, that the Ark of God was taken, and that her Father-in-law and her Husband were dead, she bowed herself and travelled; for her pains came upon her.] The great Anguish of her Mind brought on her Labour: and, as *Josephus* thinks, two Months before her Time. Which doth not well agree with what is said in the beginning of this Verse, that she was near to be delivered. The Hebrew Word which we translate bowed herself, signifies she fell on her knees. For so the manner was in those Countries: which *Ludolphus* confirms in his *Æthiopick History*, and his Commentary upon it. *L. 1. Cap. 14. N. 101.*

Ver.

Ver. 20. *And at the time of her death, the Women that stood by her.]* Assisted at her Labour.

Said unto her, Fear not, for thou hast born a Son.] The mention of which they thought would have revived her, according to what we read in the Gospel of St. John, xvi. 21.

* *But she answered not, neither did she regard it.]* Being so overcome with Sorrow and Grief, that she minded nothing that was said or done about her.

Ver. 21. *And she named the Child Icbabod, saying, The Glory is departed from Israel; because the Ark of God was taken, and because of her Father-in-Law and her Husband.]* Only having a little recovered her Spirits, she lamented this chiefly, that God was gone from them: For so the Word *Glory* frequently signifies in Scripture, *Psal.* cvi. 20. *Jerem.* ii. 11. The Hebrew Word יָכָבֹד also signifies the same with נֹת, as *Ludolphus* observes in his Commentary upon his *Æthiopick History*, *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* xvi. 106. And so *Bochartus* here translates *Icbabod*, by *Inglorious*, or without Glory: That is, saith he, *without the true God.* *P.* 1. *Hieroz.* L. 2. *Cap.* 34.

Ver. 22. *And she said, The Glory is departed from Israel; for the Ark of God is taken.]* She seems to have expired with these Words; which she repeats again, because this chiefly lay at her Heart; as the Concerns of Religion do in all pious Spirits.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. **A**ND the Philistines took the Ark of God.] Why God suffered the Ark of his Presence to fall into the hands of those uncircumcised People, *Abarbinel* gives four or five Reasons. The *Israelites* were such great Sinners, that they were unworthy of his Presence among them. The Idolatry of *Micah* remained to this day in the Land; therefore he fulfilled his Threatning, *Levit.* xxvi. 19, 31. The Sin also of the Priests highly provoked him to deliver up the Ark, which was in their hands, when they were killed. And the *Israelites* greatly offended in carrying the Ark into the Battle, without asking Counsel of God: who resolved to demonstrate his Power even among the Enemies of *Israel*.

And brought it from Eben-ezer.] Where the *Israelites* were encamped before the Battle, *iv.* 1. and whither it is possible they fled, to save the Ark, when their Army was overthrown.

Unto Ashdod.] One of the five Cities of the *Philistines*, where some of the *Anakims* were left unsubdued by *Joshua*, (*Josh.* xi. 22.) and was in future times the principal City of the Country, called *Azotus*. And perhaps it was so now; which might be the reason the Ark was carried thither, rather than to any other City; being situated also in the middle of the five Principalities; and having a famous Temple in it (mentioned in the next Verse) whither all the Country resorted.

Ver. 2. *And when the Philistines took the Ark of God, they brought it into the House of Dagon, and set it by Dagon.]* The Heathen were wont

to offer part of the Spoil that they took in War, unto their Gods: And what could there be more acceptable than this to *Dagon*, who seemed to have triumphed over the God of *Israel*? Thus we read in After-ages, how Conquerors triumphed not only over the People whom they vanquished, but over their Gods also. As *Isaiab* represented *Bel* and *Nebo* carried Captive, when *Babylon* was taken, *xlvi.* 1, 2. And *Jeremiab* saith the same of *Chemosh*, the God of *Moab*, and *Malcolm* the God of *Ammon*, *xlvi.* 7. *xliv.* 3. And see *Daniel* xi. 8. Thus the *Romans* did very frequently, as *Bochartus* shews in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 34. Yet there are some who imagine, that their setting the Ark by *Dagon*, (on the side of him) signified that they intended to do some honour to it, as having the Presence of God in it. Concerning *Dagon*, see what I have noted upon *Judges* xvi. 23. and *Mr. Selden*, *Syntag.* 2. *de Diis Syris*, *Cap.* 3. where he confutes those who think *Dagon* hath his Name from *Dagan*, which signifies *Corn*, (as if he were the Inventer of it, and confirms the Opinion of those who think he had his Name from *Dag*, which signifies a *Fish*; *Fishes* and *Pigeons* being sacred to him. Some take this Idol to have been the same among the *Syrians*, with *Triton* among the *Europeans*, or with *Neptune*, or (as *Scaliger* will have it) with *Venus*, who was worshipped under the Name of *Atergatis*, and *Adargatis*: which are only the Corruption of the Hebrew Words *Addir-daga*, i. e. *Magnificent Fish*, as *Mr. Selden* there observes: Tho' *Bochart* thinks this was a different Goddess from *Dagon*. *P.* 1. *Hieroz.* *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 6.

Ver. 3. *And when they of Ashdod arose early in the morning.]* To go to pray at the Temple.

Behold, Dagon was slain with his Face to the earth, before the Ark of the LORD.] In a Posture of the most humble Adoration; which was Prostration; acknowledging the God of *Israel* to be above all Gods. In this some of the *Jews* think there was a *Miracle* in a *Miracle*, as they speak: For whereas the Ark was set by *Dagon*, (i. e. on one side of him) when *Dagon* fell, it was not right forward, but he was turned about with his Face towards the Ark. See *Buxtorf de Arca Fœderis*, p. 171.

And they took Dagon and set him in his place again.] Looking upon it as a Mischance.

Ver. 4. *And when they rose early on the morrow morning, behold Dagon was slain with his Face to the Ground before the Ark of the LORD.]* Which shewed his former Fall was not by Chance, but by the Power of God, before whom he could not stand.

And the Head of Dagon, and both the Palms of his Hands, were cut off upon the threshold.] It is likely *Dagon* stood on high, upon some Pedestal or Altar; from whence he was not only thrown down, but his Head and his Hands thrown out of the Door, with the greatest Contempt; being cut off upon the Threshold of the Temple. A Token (as most Interpreters think) that this Idol was void of Wisdom and Power, his Head and his Hands (which are the Seat of those Qualities) being gone. Some have a Fancy that *Dagon* had Feet also upon his Tail:

Tail : From whence the LXX it is likely here adds, that both his Feet were cut off also. Which hath no ground at all in the *Hebrew* Text : See *Selden* in the fore-named Book ; and *Vossius de Idolol.* L. 2. Cap. 16.

Only the stump of Dagon was left him.] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *only Dagon was left to him.* That is, saith *Kimchi*, *nothing but the Form of a Fish remained* ; all that resembled a Man being broken off. Thus the LORD shewed there was no God besides him : His Ark, tho' taken captive and carried into a strange Land (as *St. Chrysostom* discourses, *Orat. v. adversus Judæos*) throwing down their Idol twice, and thereby demonstrating, that the *Israelites* were not overthrown, for want of any Power in their God to defend them, but for the Iniquity of those that worshipped him.

Ver. 5. *Therefore neither the Priests of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's house, tread on the Threshold of Dagon, unto this day.*] Out of Reverence to it ; looking upon it (as *Abarbinel* glosses) as an holy thing, by the touch of *Dagon's* Head and Hands. So foolishly did they pervert the meaning of God ; that instead of thinking *Dagon* to be no God, they honoured the very Threshold of his Temple, as if it had some Divinity in it. For it is an idle Conceit which the *Jews* have in *Jalkut*, that forsaking *Dagon*, they worshipped his Threshold. See *Buxtorf* in his *Hist. Arca*, Cap. xix. p. 172. This Superstition continued for some Ages, as *Bochartus* gathers from *Zephani.* i. 9. where God saith he will punish those *that leap on the Threshold*, after the manner of the *Philistines*, as he expounds it after the *Targum*, P. i. *Hierozioc.* Lib. 2. Cap. 36.

From those Words, *unto this day*, *Hobbs* and such-like Writers frame an Argument, that this Book was not wrote by *Samuel* ; not considering that these things happened when *Samuel* was but a Youth, and that this was written when he was old ; so that there was a considerable space of time between them.

Ver. 6. *But the hand of the LORD was heavy upon them of Ashdod.*] Since they were so blind, as not to see his hand in throwing down their God, &c. he smote them with such sore Plagues in their own Bodies, as made them sensible of his Power.

And he destroyed them.] With a Pestilence, I suppose, of which many died. See *ver. ult.*

And smote them with Emerods, even Ashdod and the Coasts belonging to it.] Not only the People of the City, but of the Villages belonging to it, were smitten with this Plague. About which Interpreters differ very much : Some taking this Disease for a *Dysentery*, which was so violent that it rotted their Guts, and made them fall down and come out. Whereupon others think it was that which we call *Proidentia ani*, the falling of the *Fundament* : But most Interpreters, both antient and modern, take it as we do, for the *Emerods*. For it was some Disease in the Hinder-parts, as appears from the Words of the *Psalmist*, lxxviii. 66. as they are commonly understood. See my Notes on *Deut.* xxviii. 27. and *Nic. Fuller Miscell.* L. 5. Cap. 3. especially *Bochartus* in his *Hierozioc.* P. i. L. 2. Cap. 36. where he gives a large account of

the *Hebrew* Word *Apholim*, which is used only here, and in the fore-named place of *Deuteronomy*.

At the end of this Verse, the *Vulgar* and the LXX also add, that a great number of Mice started up out of the Earth, and over-running their Fields, made great waste there. But, as *Lyra* well observes, this Gloss in all likelihood being written in the Margin, out of Chap. vi. *ver.* 4, 5. it crept at last into the Text, tho' it be neither in the *Hebrew*, nor the *Chaldee*, nor *Syriac*, nor *Arabic*. See *Bochart* in his *Hierozioc.* P. i. Lib. 3. Cap. 34.

Ver. 7. *And when the men of Ashdod saw that it was so, they said, The Ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us ; for his hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god.*] Now their Eyes were opened to see, that tho' they had vanquished the *Israelites*, they could not stand before the God of *Israel*. And it seems no unreasonable Conjecture, that they speak here, and in the following Verse, concerning the Ark, with a Note of Distinction ; calling it, *the Ark of the God of Israel*, *ver.* 8, 10, 11. vi. 3. And *the Ark of the LORD*, vi. 8. For other Nations had such Arks, and for the same use, to put their Mysteries in them : As in this was the Tables of the Covenant alone. *Clemens Alexandrinus* relates what Trash and other filthy stuff was in the *μυστικὰ κιςαί*, the mystical Coffers of the Heathen. From whose Superstition that the *Israelites* might be preserved, God perhaps appointed this Ark to be made by *Moses*. See his *Προτριπτικός λόγος*, p. 13, 14.

Ver. 8. *They sent therefore and gathered the Lords of the Philistines unto them, and said, What shall we do with the Ark of the God of Israel ?*] They desired a general Council might be held, to consult what to do in this case, whether to keep the Ark, or how to dispose of it.

And they answered.] i. e. The Lords of the *Philistines* (who in the Language of that Country were called *Sarnim*, the same with *Sarim* in *Hebrew*) came to the following Resolution.

Let the Ark of the God of Israel be carried about unto Gath ; and they carried the Ark of the God of Israel about thither.] They seem to be possessed with a superstitious Conceit, that there was something in the place, which was offensive to him ; and that he might be better pleased with another : Just as *Aeneas* and his People indited their Beds and their Houses, of the Disasters that befel them ; and *Cadmus* forsook his own City,

————— *tanquam fortuna locorum*
Non sua se premeret —————

As if the ill Luck which hunted him, had been the Place's, not his own : As our *Dr. Jackson* observes out of *Ovid*, in his *Original of Unbelief*, Chap. xviii. Paragr. 4.

Gath was the next City to *Ashdod*, Northward of it : In which some of the *Anakims* also remained. *Josh.* xi. 21.

Ver. 9. *And it was so, that after they had carried it about, the Hand of the LORD was against the City, with a very great Destruction.*] A great many died of the Pestilence, as they had done at *Ashdod*.

And he smote the Men of the City both small and great, and they had Emerods in their secret parts.] They that did not die, were sorely tormented by *Emerods*; which was a Disease they had never known before; as some understand the last Words. Or, they had those the Physicians call *blind Emerods*: which do not swell outwardly, but lie hidden within; and are the most grievous, and hard to be cured of all other.

Ver. 10. *Therefore they sent the Ark of God to Ekron.]* The last City of the *Philistines* Northward: Where in After-times (if not now) the famous God called *Baalzebub* was worshipped, 2 Kings i. 2.

And it came to pass as the Ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, saying, They have brought about the Ark of the God of Israel to us, to slay us and our People.] These seem to be the Words of the Governors of the City; who had learned from the Experience of the other great Cities, that no place was secure from the Stroke of the God of *Israel*.

Ver. 11. *So they sent and gathered together all the Lords of the Philistines.]* As they of *Ashdod* had done, ver. 6.

And said, Send away the Ark of the God of Israel, and let it go again to its own place, that it slay us not, and our People.] Destroy the whole City.

For there was a deadly destruction throughout all the City, and the hand of God was very sore upon them.] Which made them desire it might be sent out of the Country, and not to the other Cities in the South, *Gaza* and *Ascalon*.

Ver. 12. *And the Men that died not, were smote with Emerods; and the Cry of the City went up to Heaven.]* This is the Explication of the foregoing Words: Some were struck with the Pestilence as soon as the Ark came thither, and others lingered under intolerable Pains, which made them cry out in an inexpressible manner: For this is an hyperbolical Speech; things that are exceeding great beyond expression, being said to reach up to Heaven, *Deut. i. 28*. Thus *Virgil*, L. 2. *Æneid*. in many places, ver. 223, 338, 488.

Clamores simul horridos ad sydera tollit.

----- *Sublatus ad æthera clamor.*

----- *Ferit aurea sydera clamor.*

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. **A**ND the Ark of the LORD was in the Country of the *Philistines* seven Months.] The Hebrew Word *Sadeth*, which we translate *Country*, signifying a *Field* (as the LXX here translates it, ἐν ἀγρῷ) *Theodoret*, and *Procopius Gazæus*, think, that the *Philistines* being so plagued by the Ark in their Cities, sent it into the open Fields: But were disappointed of their hope, of being freer from the hand of God there, than in their Cities; for Mice sprung up out of the Ground, and wasted their Corn and their Fruits, as the LXX here add, at the end of this Verse, as they did in the foregoing Chapter, ver. 6. ἡ γῆ ἐξέζεον ἢ ὡς αὐτῶν μυίας, and their Land bubbled up Mice. But the *Chaldee* hath no such thing;

and faith expressly, the Ark was in the Cities of the *Philistines* seven Months.

Ver. 2. *And the Philistines.]* That is, the Lords of the Country.

Called for the Priests.] Who were best skill'd in sacred Rites and Ceremonies.

And the Diviners.] Who were a kind of Prophets, pretending to know the Will of God, and to foretell future Events. See *Deut. xviii. 12*. of this Word *Kosemim*, which we translate *Diviners*. From whence *Bochartus* thinks the Roman Word *Casmilli* is derived; being as much as *Kosme-el*, the Minister of God.

Saying, Tell us what we shall do to the Ark of the LORD?] They never called it the Ark of the LORD 'till this time: But now were struck with some apprehension that the LORD was above all Gods.

Tell us wherewith we shall send it to its place.] They did not call them to be resolved by them, whether they should send it home, or no, (for upon that they seem to have been resolved already, ver. 11.) but in what manner it should be sent, and whether accompanied with any Presents to obtain his Favour.

Ver. 3. *And they said, If ye send away the Ark of the God of Israel?] Against which Resolution they had nothing to object, but rather approved it.*

Send it not empty.] They answer directly to the Question, first in general; that it must not be sent back without some Offering.

But in any wise return him a Trespass-offering.] Concerning the Hebrew Word *Asbam*, which we translate *Trespass-offering*, and how it differs from a *Sin-offering*, see upon *Levit. v. 15*. It seems to be presented by the *Philistines*, as an Acknowledgment that they had offended the God of *Israel*, by bringing his Ark from its proper Place; for which they begged his pardon by this Offering.

Then ye shall be healed; and it shall be known to you, why his Hand is not removed from you.] It seems their Plagues still continued (notwithstanding their Resolution to send home the Ark) but they hoped by this Offering they would be removed; and the Reason would appear why they were removed no sooner: For these Diviners were not sure from whence these Plagues came: But by this means they thought they should either be healed, or know the Ark was not the cause of their Sicknefs.

Ver. 4. *Then said they, What shall be the Trespass-offering, which we shall return to him?] It is very observable what Reverence they had to their Priests and Prophets, without whose Advice they would do nothing: And therefore desire to be particularly informed, what the Trespass-offering should be; that they might not send one that was improper. All Nations thought their Gods were to be appeased, when they were angry, by honorary Gifts, as many have observed: Particularly *Bochartus* in his *Hierozyicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 36. And of that Opinion they were in these antient times. But wise Men still give it in charge, *Ne quis impius oblati donis Deum placare audeat*: That no wicked Man should presume to attempt to appease God, by the offering of Gifts, as *Cicero* speaks, L. 2. *de Legibus*.*

They

They answered, Five golden Emerods, and five golden Mice, according to the Number of the Lords of the Philistines.] Who were five, and were to bear the charge of offering one for each of them. This also was a Custom among the ancient Heathens to consecrate unto their Gods such Monuments of their Deliverances, as represented the Evils from which they were freed. As they dedicated to *Isis* and *Neptune* a Table, which contained the express Image of the Shipwreck, which they had escaped : And Slaves and Captives, when they had regained their Liberty, offered their Chains. Which Christians in the fifth Century began to imitate, as *Bochartus* observes (in the forenamed Place) out of *Theodoret*. Accordingly the *Philistines*, hoping shortly to be delivered from the *Emerods* and *Mice*, wherewith they were sorely afflicted, sent the Images of them unto that God from whom they expected Deliverance. And this is still practised among the Indians, as *Tavernier* relates in his Travels to their Country, p. 92. where he saith, That when any Pilgrim goes to a *Pagod* for the Cure of any Disease, he brings the Figure of the Member affected ; made either of Gold, Silver, or Copper, according to his Quality ; which he offers to his God, and then falls a singing, as all others do after they have offered. Mr. *Selden* also hath observed, that *Mice* were used among the ancient Heathen for Lustration and Cleansing, *de Diis Syris*, Syntag. 1. Cap. 6.

For one Plague was on you all, and on your Land.] The Plague of *Emerods* upon their own Bodies ; and the Plague of *Mice* upon their Land.

Ver. 5. *Wherefore ye shall make Images of the Emerods and Images of your Mice, which mar the Land.]* By this it appears that their Country was infested by *Mice*, which had eaten their Corn in the Field, and other Fruits of the Earth. Which is a Plague which divers ancient Authors mention, as sent upon several Countries, by the Anger of their Gods : Particularly upon a City in *Mysia*, and upon the Country of *Troas*, as is observed by *Huetius*, in his *Quæstiones Alnetaneæ*, Lib. ii. Cap. 12. N. 12. And *Bochart* hath collected a great many more Examples of such Devastations, in *Spain*, *Italy*, *Thrace*, &c. made by *Mice* : Which have the Name of *Achbar* in *Hebrew* (as he thinks) signifying a Destroyer of the Field, *Hieroz.* P. 1. L. 3. Cap. 34.

And ye shall give Glory unto the God of Israel.] That is, acknowledge him, by this Present to him, to be the Inflicter of these Plagues, and to have Power to remove them ; begging his Pardon, and seeking for healing from him. For thus this Phrase signifies in the like case, *Revel.* xvi. 9. where *St. John* complains, that after many Plagues Men did not repent, to give glory unto God : That is, by repenting, to acknowledge his Sovereign Authority, Justice, Holiness, &c.

Perhaps he will lighten his Hand from off you, and from off your Gods, and from off your Land.] For they had all suffered ; their Gods, as well as themselves, and their Land.

Ver. 6. *Wherefore then do ye harden your Hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their Hearts, when he had wrought wonderfully among them.]*

These Words seem to import, that some of them were loth to send the Ark away with such Presents ; and objected against it : Which moved the Priests and Diviners, to bid them take heed, lest they brought upon themselves the Fate of *Pharaoh*, and his People. With whose History these Men were acquainted ; and being discreet Persons, made a good use of the Examples of former times : And believed as much as many of the *Israelites* did, or rather more.

Did they not let the People go, and they departed?] When it was too late, they consented to what was demanded. The *Jews* say in *Talkut*, that the *Philistines* at first said among themselves, this is the God who smote the *Egyptians* with ten Plagues : But they are all ended. Whereupon God said, *Do you imagine I have not one Plague more ? I will send such an one upon you, as never was from the beginning of the World, &c.* See *Buxtorf. Hist. Arcæ Fœderis*, cap. 19. If they had any such Thoughts, their Priests pertinently enough put them in mind of the *Egyptians* : That they might not make themselves like them in hardness of heart ; as God had made them like in their Plagues.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore make a new Cart, and take two Milch Kine, on which there hath come no Yoke.]* Both these were in honour of the Ark ; that they employed nothing about it, which had ever served for any other use. And there was another Reason also for the latter of these ; that they might be the more certain they were led by the God of *Israel*, if they went directly unto his Country : For Kine unaccustomed to the Yoke, are wont to run back, and turn out of the way into which they are put.

And tie the Kine to the Cart, and bring their Calves home from them?] This would make it still more wonderful, if they did not return to their Calves, when they heard them bleat after them ; which they naturally would have done, if a greater Power had not drawn them a contrary way.

Ver. 8. *And take the Ark of the LORD, and lay it upon the Cart ; and put the Jewels of Gold, which you return him for a Trespass-offering, in a Coffer by the side thereof ; and send it away, that it may go.]* They had either heard, or by their present Sufferings were made to fear, that it was dangerous to look into the Ark ; and therefore they did not open it, to put their Present within it ; but put it in a Coffer by the side of it. It is probable the word *Argaz* (which we meet withal no where else) in the Language of the *Philistines* signifies either a Coffer, or a Purse, or a Wallet, as *Josephus* translates it : And *Bochartus* thinks it likely, that these Golden Jewels were put into little Bags, which hung on either side the Ark.

Ver. 9. *And see if it go by the way of its own Coast.]* Without any Guide : And being set (as *Josephus* saith) in a Place where three ways met.

To Bethshemesh.] A City in the Tribe of *Judah*, in the Confines of both Countries.

Then he hath done us this great Evil ; but if not, then we shall know that it is not his Hand that smote us ; it was a Chance that happened to us.] From some unknown Cause.

Ver. 10. *And the Men did so, and took two Milch Kine, and tied them to the Cart; and shut up their Calves at home.]* The Men of Ekron did all this, as the Priests had directed.

Ver. 11. *And they laid the Ark of the LORD upon the Cart, and the Coffers, with the Mice of Gold, and the Images of their Emerods.*

Ver. 12. *And the Kine took the straight way, to the way of Bethshemesh, and went along the high way, lowing as they went; and turned not aside to the right hand, or to the left.]* Tho' they had no Driver or visible Director; and had such strong Attractives to draw them back, and there were so many other ways in which they might have gone; yet they went directly towards Bethshemesh, without the least deviation; lowing all the way after their Calves, which had been taken from them: Unto whom their Natural Affection would have inclined them to return, if by an higher Hand they had not been led forward to the Land of Judah.

And the Lords of the Philistines went after them to the Borders of Bethshemesh.] To observe, (as the Priests advised, ver. 9.) whether of themselves they would go thither.

Ver. 13. *And they of Bethshemesh were reaping their Wheat-Harvest in the Valley.]* Which being about Pentecost, it shews the Ark was taken Captive in the latter end of the foregoing Year. Compare this with ver. 1.

And they lift up their Eyes and saw the Ark, and rejoiced to see it.] Come back to them in such a wonderful manner, without any visible Conductor.

Ver. 14. *And the Cart came into the Field of Joshua a Bethshemite, and stood there.]* This was another marvellous thing, that the Kine went no further; being come into a Territory of a City of the Priests, (for so Bethshemesh was. See upon Josh. xxi. 16.) who were to take care of the Ark of God.

Where there was a great Stone.] Which seems to have been the Boundary of the two Countries.

And they clave the Wood of the Cart, and offered the Kine a Burnt-offering unto the LORD.] The great Stone, I suppose, serving instead of an Altar; whereon they offered a whole Burnt-offering of Praise and Thanks to God for his Goodness: For they thought in reason that this Cart, and these Kine, should never be converted to any common use, and therefore employed them in making this Sacrifice. In which the Priests did not sin, tho' Cows were not, by the Law, allowed to be offered to God; and no Offering was to be made, but in the Place which God had chosen. For this was to be understood of ordinary Offerings, not of such as an extraordinary occasion might require: And besides, the Ark being here, God was so also, (who as yet appointed no Place for its future Residence, now Shiloh was destroyed) and so their Sacrifices, they thought in reason, might be here acceptable to him. And they the rather chose to offer these Cows to God, because they belonged to him, and therefore were to be his Sacrifices; they having drawn his Ark, and been particularly directed by him.

Ver. 15. *And the Levites took down the Ark of the LORD, and the Coffers that was with it,*

wherein the Jewels of Gold were.] It was not the Business of the Levites to take down the Ark; but of the Priests: Who after they had disposed it to be fit for the Levites to take it upon their shoulders, the Kobathites were to carry it. See Numb. iv. 15.

And put them upon the great Stone.] Where, it is probable, they had before offered up the Kine, instead of an Altar.

And the Men of Bethshemesh offered Burnt-offerings, and sacrificed Sacrifices the same day unto the LORD.] The Sacrifices (which they are said to sacrifice) were Peace-offerings; which they added to their whole Burnt-sacrifices, that they might make a Feast upon them; as an Expression of their great Joy to see the Ark returned to them in such a miraculous manner.

Ver. 16. *And when the five Lords of the Philistines.]* Who stood upon the Borders of their Country, ver. 12.

Had seen it.] Beheld all the forenamed Wonders.

They returned to Ekron the same day.] And reported, no doubt, what they had seen: Which convinced them, that their Plagues came from the God of Israel.

Ver. 17. *And these are the golden Emerods which the Philistines returned for a Trespass-offering unto the LORD. For Ashdod one, for Gaza one, for Askelon one, for Gath one, for Ekron one.]* Each City of this Country, I suppose, was at the charge of presenting one Emerod. Which Cities are not reckoned in the order wherein they lay; but Ashdod being the City to which the Ark was first brought, it is mentioned first. But from South to North they lay in this order, Gaza, Askelon, Ashdod, (which, as I said, was in the middle of them) Gath and Ekron.

Ver. 18. *And the golden Mice, according to the number of all the Cities of the Philistines, belonging to the five Lords; both of fenced Cities and of Country Villages, even unto the great Stone of Abel, whereon they set down the Ark of the LORD: Which Stone remaineth to this day in the Field of Joshua the Bethshemite.]* As the golden Emerods were made at the publick Charge of those Cities, so were the Mice also: Unto the making of which, the Villages likewise contributed. For their Fields being principally afflicted by the Mice, as the Cities were by the Emerods; and they being all Sharers, some way or other, in the publick Calamities, it was thought reasonable they should all join in this Trespass-offering: Which was an Offering of the whole Nation, as far as ever their Coast extended, and that was to the great Stone mentioned, ver. 14. which is there called Eben Gedolah, the great Stone: But he Ebelgedolah, the great weeping, from the Lamentations which were here made, upon the following occasion mentioned in the next Verse.

Ver. 19. *And he smote the Men of Bethshemesh, because they had looked into the Ark of the LORD.]* Which God had forbidden, not only to the common People, but to the Sons of Levi also, Numb. iv. 20. But their Curiosity made them forget their Duty: Being desirous either to see whether the Philistines had taken out of the Tables the Covenant; or that they might have a view of such

an antient Sacred Monument, written by God's own Hand. Out of this Story, as *Bochartus* ingeniously conjectures, the *Greeks* forged the Fable of *Bacchus*; who was very angry with the *Athenians*, because they did not receive his Mysteries with Pomp, when they were brought out of *Bæotia* into *Attica*; and smote them with a sore Disease in their Secret Parts. In his *Canaan*, Lib. 1. Cap. 18. in the latter end.

Even he smote of the People fifty thousand, and threescore and ten Men.] This Translation is made by an unaccountable transposition of the words: which in the *Hebrew* lie exactly thus; He smote of the People, threescore and ten men, fifty thousand men. Which the *Gemara*, with *Tarchi* and *Kimchi*, and the *Targum* expound, He smote all the Sanhedrim, which were Seventy Men, and fifty thousand of the common People. (See *Selden*, Lib. 2. de Synedr. Cap. 19. N. 3.) But as it is a question whether there was any such Sanhedrim in these days, and it is certain there was not at *Bethshemesb*; so it is not likely it was such a populous Place, nor is there any Particle to couple the last Sum with the foregoing. Therefore *Bochart's* Interpretation is far more reasonable, which is this, He smote threescore and ten men; fifty out of a thousand men. God was so indulgent, that is, as not to slay all that were guilty, but only seventy of them; observing this proportion, that out of a thousand Offenders, he smote only fifty Persons; that is, a twentieth part. So that of fourteen hundred that deserved Punishment, he smote only seventy Men; which is the twentieth part of that Number. And this Interpretation is very easy, not only supplying the Particle *Mem* before *Eleph*, making the sense to be out of a thousand. And he instances in many places of Scripture, where this Particle is manifestly wanting, to make out the true meaning. See his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 36. p. 370. where he shows that *Josephus* thus understood these Words, Lib. 6. Antiq. Cap. 2. where he saith God smote ἑβδομήκοντα τῶν ἐν τῇ Βηθσάμης κώμῃ, Seventy of those of the Village of *Bethshemesb*. And thus *Abarbinel* also understands the first Words, that he smote at *Bethshemesb* only seventy Men; the other number, he thinks, refers to those who were slain in the Country of the *Philistines*; the Story whereof is now finished. For the Particle *Beth*, he thinks, signifies as much as *with*, in this manner: Together with the seventy of *Bethshemesb*, he smote in all fifty thousand, because of the Ark. But *Bochartus's* Interpretation is most natural; which is highly applauded by another Person of very great Learning: *Johan. Wagenfeli*, who in his Annotations upon the *Gemara* of *Sota*, (Cap. 7. Sect. 15.) saith, Ipsa veritas militat, Truth it self defends this Opinion of *Bochartus*. And indeed it cannot be conceived, there should be so many, as our Translation supposes, to be slain at *Bethshemesb*, and the Coasts thereof, being but a Village: Or if there had, it is very improbable that God would smite so many at once: For there would have been none left to make Lamentation. Therefore as the *Romans* decimated the Soldiers that had offended; that is, put every tenth Man to death; so God here punished half so

many for this Offence of looking into the Ark.

And the People lamented, because the LORD had smitten of the People with a great Slaughter.] It was a great Slaughter, considering the smallness of this Place; as *Abarbinel* glosses upon these Words; who takes it, as *Josephus* doth, for a Village. And it is not strange, that some should be smitten with Death; for it was always accounted in all Nations, a great Prophaneness for any one that was not initiated, to look into their Mysteries: To prevent which hereafter, God made so many Examples of his Displeasure in this place. Instances of those among the Heathen, who were struck blind, or upon whom some other Calamity fell, upon such account, the Illustrious *Spanhemius* hath noted in his Observations upon *Callimachus* his Hymn in *Lavacrum Palladis*, ver. 34. yea, tho' they did it ignorantly, as he shews upon ver. 78, & 82. p. 606. See also *Huetius* in his *Alnetanæ Questiones*, Lib. 2. Cap. 12. p. 200.

Ver. 20. And the Men of *Bethshemesb* said, Who is able to stand before this holy LORD God? And to whom shall he go up from us?] They seem, by this, to be sensible of their Rashness, and acknowledge the Holiness of God to be such, that they were not worthy of his Divine Presence among them: But desire that some who could do him honour better than they, might take the Ark into their Care. But *Abarbinel* thinks they were only struck with a great fear, as the *Philistines* were when God plagued them: Which made them send the Ark from one Place to another; as they of *Bethshemesb* now sent to those of *Kirjath-jearim*, to come and fetch the Ark to their City; fearing more of them should die, if it staid with them at *Bethshemesb*.

Ver. 21. And they sent Messengers to the Inhabitants of *Kirjath-jearim*, saying, The *Philistines* have brought again the Ark of the LORD, come ye down and fetch it unto you.] This was a City which stood upon a Hill, and therefore they desired them to come down from thence. And being a strong Place, there they thought the Ark might be secure, in case of any new Incursions of their Enemies. See concerning this City, *Josh.* xv. 9, 10. where it is called also *Kirjath-Baal*, xviii. 14. and *Baalab*, or *Baal-Judah*, 2 Sam. vi. 2. 1 Chron. xiii. 6.

C H A P. VII.

Ver. 1. AND the Men of *Kirjath-jearim* came, and fetch'd up the Ark of the LORD.] They cheerfully received the Message; and were so far from thinking themselves in danger by entertaining it, that they thought it a Blessing, and kept it with them till the Reign of *David*.

And brought it to the House of *Aminadab*, in the Hill.] In the highest Part, I suppose, of the City: As *David* afterwards placed it upon Mount *Sion*.

And sanctified *Eleazer* his Son to keep the Ark of the LORD.] Which belonged to the *Levites*: Therefore *Aminadab* was of that Tribe, otherwise he could not have consecrated (*i. e.* set apart,

apart, or solemnly appointed) his Son to keep the Ark, i. e. to attend it, and see that no Rudeness was offered to it; as well as to keep a Guard about it, to defend it from violence. If it be enquired why they did not carry the Ark to *Shiloh*, its ancient Seat; the Answer is, that the *Philistines* had destroyed that Place; and the *Tabernacle* upon the Death of *Eli*, was removed from thence unto *Nob*; where it remained till the Death of *Samuel*. And after his Death, it was carried to *Gibeon*, where it remained fifty Years, according to the account of the Author of *Seder Olam Rabba*. All which time the Ark was in *Kirjath-jearim*, 'till *David* brought it first to the House of *Obed-Edom*, and then to his own City. After which the *Tabernacle* still remained at *Gibeon* till *Solomon's* Temple was built, 1 *Chron.* xvi. 39. 2 *Chron.* i. 3. where we read, that even after the Death of his Father, *Solomon* sacrificed at *Gibeon*, the *Tabernacle* being there.

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass while the Ark abode in Kirjath-jearim the time was long, for it was twenty Years.*] This is not to be understood of the whole time that the Ark remained here: For it continued, as I said before, in this Place, till the time of *David*, (2 *Chron.* vi. 3.) which was about forty six Years: therefore it refers to the following Words.

And all the House of Israel lamented after the LORD.] Or rather, (as Dr. *Lightfoot* translates them) *Then all the House of Israel, &c.* Their Idolatry had taken such deep root in them, that neither the loss of the Ark, nor the slaughter of so many *Israelites* wrought upon their Hearts: But it was twenty Years before they minded the Ark, or took any notice of it: Then they were awakened to some sense of their Duty, and began to seek the Favour of God, and lament their Apostacy from him. See his *Annot.* on this Place, and upon *Acts* iii. 24. p. 758. And one Reason why they did not regard the Ark, was perhaps, because it was now seated in the Borders of the Country of the *Philistines*, of whom they were afraid. And this is the sense of *Abarbinel*. For tho' others think, that from the Day that the Ark came to *Kirjath-jearim*, the *Israelites* began to lament their Sins, and to turn to God; having heard of the Miracles that had been done in the Land of the *Philistines*, &c. yet he doth not approve of this Opinion; but will have their Lamentation to begin after the Ark had been twenty Years at this Place: Where it remained many more Years than twenty.

Ver. 3. *And Samuel spake unto all the House of Israel.*] Who were assembled at some solemn Festival; or were summoned by him to attend him: For after the Death of *Eli* he began to judge *Israel*.

If you return to the LORD with all your heart.] By this it appears, that his Reproofs, and Instructions, and the Representation he had made of their Sin, and of their Danger, had touched their Hearts, and made them begin to lament themselves, and seek his Favour: Whereupon he exhorts them, to give this following Proof of their Sincerity.

Then put away the strange Gods and Ashtaroth, from among you.] By the strange Gods I take

Baalim to be meant: Which are frequently joined with *Ashtaroth*, as they are in the very next Verse to this, where their Obedience to this Exhortation is reported. And see upon *Judges* ii. 12, 13, 17. *Judges* iii. 7. viii. 33.

And prepare your Heart unto the LORD.] By serious Resolutions.

To serve him only.] As it follows in the next Verse.

And he will deliver you out of the hands of the Philistines.] Who had now oppressed them, less or more, for the space of forty Years.

Ver. 4. *Then the Children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the LORD only.*] There was now, I suppose, a general Reformation made in the Worship of God.

Ver. 5. *And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh.*] A Place where they had been wont anciently to assemble upon great Occasions. See upon *Judges* xx. 1.

And I will pray for you unto the LORD.] To accept of their Repentance, and pardon their Sins, and establish them in their good Resolution to serve the LORD alone; and to deliver them out of the hand of the *Philistines*. For all which he could have prayed alone by himself; but he thought their Publick Prayer would be more effectual.

Ver. 6. *And they gathered in Mizpeh, and drew Water, and poured it out before the LORD, and fasted on that Day, and said there, We have sinned against the LORD.*] This being a Day of Humiliation, Fasting and Prayer, as appears by the latter part of these Words, Interpreters commonly expound the former Part of them, as belonging to the same matter. And some think, as the *Targum* doth, that by *pouring out Water*, is to be understood the Tears of Contrition, which were drawn from the bottom of their Hearts, and fell from their Eyes before the LORD. Others think they washed their Bodies in Water, signifying the Purification of their Souls from the filthiness of Sin. And others, (which *Bochartus* himself thinks more probable) that this Water was poured on the Ground, in token of the Expiation of their Sin, which they desired and hoped might be remembered no more: as Water poured on the Ground could no more be seen. Unto which they think a Place in *Job* alludes, xi. 16. But we no where find any such Rite as this among the *Jews*, either in ancient, or later times. And the Conjecture of *Fortunatus Scacchus* seems more ingenious, That an Altar being to be erected to offer Sacrifice, they poured out Water to cleanse the Ground, that it might not be set up in an impure Place, *Myrothee. Elcochrisin. Sacr.* 2. Cap. 31. But after all, I think the Interpretation which *Constantine L'Empereur* hath given of these Words (in his *Annot.* on *Codex Middoth*, Cap. 2.) is far more reasonable; which is, that they poured out Water in token of Joy, after they had fasted and confessed their Sins, (for he translates the Words, *Postquam jejunarunt, after they had fasted on that day,*) as they were wont to do in the Feast of Tabernacles: Unto which he refers those Words in *Isa.* xii. 3. in which the Prophet foretels the Joy that should be in the Days of the Messiah, by saying, *Ye shall draw Waters*

Waters with Joy out of the Wells of Salvation : Alluding to a known Rite among the *Israelites*, in the Feast of Tabernacles, unto which our Saviour is thought to allude, *John vii. 37, 38.* And there is the greater Reason for this Interpretation, because *Samuel* had just before promised them, that the *L O R D* would deliver them from the *Philistines*, if they heartily repented : Which made them rejoice in hope of it, because they did now sincerely turn to him.

And Samuel judged the Children of Israel in Mizpeh.] When they were reconciled to God, he reconciled them one to another, by determining their Differences, and doing right where any one was wrong'd : Or he declared the Law to them whereby they were to be judged ; and perhaps punished some gross Idolaters, or other great Offenders.

Ver. 7. *And when the Philistines heard that the Children of Israel were gathered together at Mizpeh, the Lords of the Philistines went up against Israel.]* Being ignorant of the true Reasons of this Meeting, the *Philistines* imagined the *Israelites* assembled to consult about War, and so resolved to be beforehand with them, and surprize them.

And when the Children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines.] Being unarm'd, I suppose, or not prepared to give them Battle.

Ver. 8. *And the Children of Israel said unto Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the L O R D our God for us, that he will save us out of the hands of the Philistines.]* According to the Promise made to them, ver. 3.

Ver. 9. *And Samuel took a sucking Lamb.]* For after a Lamb was eight days old, it was fit to be sacrificed unto God, *Exod. xxii. 30. Levit. xvii. 27.* The Hebrew Word *Tale*, is the Name for the youngest Sheep ; as *Ajil* is for the eldest ; and *Chebes* for one between both.

And offered it for a Burnt-offering wholly unto the L O R D.] Whereby he supplicated the Divine Mercy, as the Son of *Sirach* explains it, *Ecclus. xlv. 16.* He called upon the mighty *L O R D*, when his Enemies pressed him on every side, *ἐν πρὸςφύρᾳ*, by the Obligation of a sucking Lamb.

And Samuel cried unto the L O R D God of Israel, and the L O R D heard him.] Which is a demonstration that tho' he was not a Priest, nor this place appointed for Sacrifice ; yet as a Prophet, he had Authority from God, to build an Altar any where, and to make his Supplication in this manner. Thus other holy Men, *Gideon* and *Manoah*, were warranted to offer extraordinary Sacrifices, in places which God had not before appointed. And it is probable, that God answer'd *Samuel*, as he did *Manoah*, by Fire consuming the Sacrifice, in testimony of God's acceptance, *Judges xiii. 20.* And thus we read of an Altar he built in another place, ver. 17. as *Elijah* did in following times.

Ver. 10. *And as Samuel was offering up the Burnt-offering.]* Before it was consumed.

The Philistines drew near to Battle against Israel.] Hoping to find them unprepared. The Son of *Sirach* saith, they of *Tyre* joined with the *Philistines* in this Action, *Ecclus. xlv. 17.*

But the LORD thundered with a great Thunder on that Day, upon the Philistines, and discomfited

them ; and they were smitten before Israel.] They were affrighted, like Men out of their Wits, with Thunder and Lightning ; which killed many of them, before the *Israelites* could come up to fight them. For together with this horrible Tempest, *Josephus* saith, there was an Earthquake, and that the Earth opened in several Places, and swallowed up some of them ; who, like blind Men, ran into those Gaps.

Ver. 11. *And the Men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued after the Philistines.]* Having *Samuel* to lead them, as their Captain, according to *Josephus*.

And smote them, until they came under Beth-car.] A place in the Confines of the Tribe of *Judab*. This Victory was the more wonderful, because we do not find the *Israelites* came appointed with any Weapons to *Mizpeh* : But, as far as can be gathered by the Relation of the Fight, they smote them with their own Weapons ; which the *Philistines* threw away when they fled, and which were found among those that were slain by the Lightning.

Ver. 12. *And Samuel took a Stone and set it up between Mizpeh and Shen.]* So *Jacob* and *Joshua* had done, as Monuments of God's Mercy to them, and their Obligations to him.

And called the Name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.] That is, thus far we have gotten the better : For they were not utterly destroyed, but driven quite out of their Coasts, as it follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 13. *So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the Coast of Israel.]* He put an end to the forty Years Tyranny of the *Philistines*, mentioned *Judges xiii. 1.* (See my Notes there, and upon ver. 5. of that Chapter) and *Judges xv. 20.*

And the Hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the Days of Samuel.] As in this Battle he gave them such an overthrow, that they were quite driven out of the Country of *Israel* : So during *Samuel's* Government, 'till *Saul* was made King, we never read that they attempted with an Army to invade them ; but then they did, *xiii. 19.*

Ver. 14. *And the Cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel, were restored to Israel.]* They not only expelled the *Philistines*, but recovered also several places of which the *Philistines* had possessed themselves, during their Dominion over them.

From Ekron even unto Gath, and the Coasts thereof, did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines.] *Ekron* was in the Tribe of *Judab* ; *Josh. xv. 45.* which the *Philistines* now forsook out of fear, as some think ; or were driven out of it for the present, tho' it was not long before they got possession of it again.

And there was Peace between Israel and the Amorites.] Not by Compact and Covenant ; but by the Inclination of both Sides, they abstained from all hostile Actions. The *Amorites* were not the only Remains of the old Inhabitants of *Canaan* ; but being the most powerful among them, they had long given Name to the rest, *Gen. xv. 16.* And now the *Philistines* were thus subdued, none of them, who used to infest the *Israelites*, durst stir to give them any molestation, but sat quiet and still.

Ver.

apart, or solemnly appointed) his Son to *keep the Ark, i. e.* to attend it, and see that no Rudeness was offered to it ; as well as to keep a Guard about it, to defend it from violence. If it be enquired why they did not carry the Ark to *Shiloh*, its ancient Seat ; the Answer is, that the *Philistines* had destroyed that Place ; and the *Tabernacle* upon the Death of *Eli*, was removed from thence unto *Nob* ; where it remained till the Death of *Samuel*. And after his Death, it was carried to *Gibeon*, where it remained fifty Years, according to the account of the Author of *Seder Olam Rabba*. All which time the *Ark* was in *Kirjath-jearim*, 'till *David* brought it first to the House of *Obed-Edom*, and then to his own City. After which the *Tabernacle* still remained at *Gibeon* till *Solomon's* Temple was built, 1 *Chron.* xvi. 39. 2 *Chron.* i. 3. where we read, that even after the Death of his Father, *Solomon* sacrificed at *Gibeon*, the *Tabernacle* being there.

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Baalim to be meant : Which are frequently joined with *Ashtaroth*, as they are in the very next Verse to this, where their Obedience to this Exhortation is reported. And see upon *Judges* ii. 12, 13, 17. *Judges* iii. 7. viii. 33.

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Ver. 5. *And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh.*] A Place where they had been wont anciently to assemble upon great Occasions. See upon *Judges* xx. 1.

And I will pray for you unto the LORD.] To accept of their Repentance, and pardon their Sins, and establish them in their good Resolution to serve the LORD alone ; and to deliver them out of the hand of the *Philistines*. For all which he could have prayed alone by himself ; but he thought their Publick Prayer would be more effectual.

Ver. 6. *And they gathered in Mizpeh, and drew Water, and poured it out before the LORD, and fasted on that Day, and said there, We have sinned against the LORD.*] This being a Day of Humiliation, Fasting and Prayer, as appears by the latter part of these Words, Interpreters commonly expound the former Part of them, as belonging to the same matter. And some think, as the *Targum* doth, that by *pouring out Water*, is to be understood the Tears of Contrition, which were drawn from the bottom of their Hearts, and fell from their Eyes before the LORD. Others think they washed their Bodies in Water, signifying the Purification of their Souls from the filthiness of Sin. And others, (which *Bochartus* himself thinks more probable) that this Water was poured on the Ground, in token of the Expiation of their Sin, which they desired and hoped might be remembered no more : as Water poured on the Ground could no more be seen. Unto which they think a Place in *Job* alludes, xi. 16. But we no where find any such Rite as this among the *Jews*, either in ancient, or later times. And the Conjecture of *Fortunatus Scacchus* seems more ingenious, That an Altar being to be erected to offer Sacrifice, they poured out Water to cleanse the Ground, that it might not be set up in an impure Place, *Myrothec. Elcochrism. Sacr.* 2. Cap. 31. But after all, I think the Interpretation which *Constantine L'Empereur* hath given of these Words (in his *Annot.* on *Codex Middoth*, Cap. 2.) is far more reasonable ; which is, that they poured out Water in token of Joy, after they had fasted and confessed their Sins, (for he translates the Words, *Postquam jejunarunt, after they had fasted on that day,*) as they were wont to do in the Feast of Tabernacles : Unto which he refers those Words in *Isa.* xii. 3. in which the Prophet foretels the Joy that should be in the Days of the Messiah, by saying, *Ye shall draw Waters*

Waters with Joy out of the Wells of Salvation : Alluding to a known Rite among the *Israelites*, in the Feast of Tabernacles, unto which our Saviour is thought to allude, *John* vii. 37, 38. And there is the greater Reason for this Interpretation, because *Samuel* had just before promised them, that the LORD would deliver them from the *Philistines*, if they heartily repented : Which made them rejoice in hope of it, because they did now sincerely turn to him.

And Samuel judged the Children of Israel in Mizpeh.] When they were reconciled to God, he reconciled them one to another, by determining their Differences, and doing right where any one was wrong'd : Or he declared the Law to them whereby they were to be judged ; and perhaps punished some gross Idolaters, or other great Offenders.

Ver. 7. *And when the Philistines heard that the Children of Israel were gathered together at Mizpeh, the Lords of the Philistines went up against Israel.]* Being ignorant of the true Reasons of this Meeting, the *Philistines* imagined the *Israelites* assembled to consult about War, and so resolved to be beforehand with them, and surprize them.

And when the Children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines.] Being unarm'd, I suppose, or not prepared to give them Battle.

Ver. 8. *And the Children of Israel said unto Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that he will save us out of the hands of the Philistines.]* According to the Promise made to them, ver. 3.

Ver. 9. *And Samuel took a sucking Lamb.]* For after a Lamb was eight days old, it was fit to be sacrificed unto God, *Exod.* xxii. 30. *Levit.* xvii. 27. The Hebrew Word *Tale*, is the Name for the youngest Sheep ; as *Ajil* is for the eldest ; and *Chebes* for one between both.

And offered it for a Burnt-offering wholly unto the LORD.] Whereby he supplicated the Divine Mercy, as the Son of *Sirach* explains it, *Ecclus.* xlvi. 16. *He called upon the mighty LORD, when his Enemies pressed him on every side,* ἐν ἀποσφύγῃ, *by the Obligation of a sucking Lamb.*

And Samuel cried unto the LORD God of Israel, and the LORD heard him.] Which is a demonstration that tho' he was not a Priest, nor this place appointed for Sacrifice ; yet as a Prophet, he had Authority from God, to build an Altar any where, and to make his Supplication in this manner. Thus other holy Men, *Gideon* and *Manoah*, were warranted to offer extraordinary Sacrifices, in places which God had not before appointed. And it is probable, that God answer'd *Samuel*, as he did *Manoah*, by Fire consuming the Sacrifice, in testimony of God's acceptance, *Judges* xiii. 20. And thus we read of an Altar he built in another place, ver. 17. as *Elijah* did in following times.

Ver. 10. *And as Samuel was offering up the Burnt-offering.]* Before it was consumed.

The Philistines drew near to Battle against Israel.] Hoping to find them unprepared. The Son of *Sirach* saith, they of *Tyre* joined with the *Philistines* in this Action, *Ecclus.* xlvi. 17.

But the LORD thundered with a great Thunder on that Day, upon the Philistines, and discomfited

them ; and they were smitten before Israel.] They were affrighted, like Men out of their Wits, with Thunder and Lightning ; which killed many of them, before the *Israelites* could come up to fight them. For together with this horrible Tempest, *Josephus* saith, there was an Earthquake, and that the Earth opened in several Places, and swallowed up some of them ; who, like blind Men, ran into those Gaps.

Ver. 11. *And the Men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued after the Philistines.]* Having *Samuel* to lead them, as their Captain, according to *Josephus*.

And smote them, until they came under Beth-car.] A place in the Confines of the Tribe of *Judab*. This Victory was the more wonderful, because we do not find the *Israelites* came appointed with any Weapons to *Mizpeh* : But, as far as can be gathered by the Relation of the Fight, they smote them with their own Weapons ; which the *Philistines* threw away when they fled, and which were found among those that were slain by the Lightning.

Ver. 12. *And Samuel took a Stone and set it up between Mizpeh and Shen.]* So *Jacob* and *Joshua* had done, as Monuments of God's Mercy to them, and their Obligations to him.

And called the Name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.] That is, thus far we have gotten the better : For they were not utterly destroyed, but driven quite out of their Coasts, as it follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 13. *So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the Coast of Israel.]* He put an end to the forty Years Tyranny of the *Philistines*, mentioned *Judges* xiii. 1. (See my Notes there, and upon ver. 5. of that Chapter) and *Judges* xv. 20.

And the Hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the Days of Samuel.] As in this Battle he gave them such an overthrow, that they were quite driven out of the Country of *Israel* : So during *Samuel's* Government, 'till *Saul* was made King, we never read that they attempted with an Army to invade them ; but then they did, xiii. 19.

Ver. 14. *And the Cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel, were restored to Israel.]* They not only expelled the *Philistines*, but recovered also several places of which the *Philistines* had possessed themselves, during their Dominion over them.

From Ekron even unto Gath, and the Coasts thereof, did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines.] *Ekron* was in the Tribe of *Judab* ; *Josh.* xv. 45. which the *Philistines* now forsook out of fear, as some think ; or were driven out of it for the present, tho' it was not long before they got possession of it again.

And there was Peace between Israel and the Amorites.] Not by Compact and Covenant ; but by the Inclination of both ~~sides~~, they abstained from all hostile Actions. The *Amorites* were not the only Remains of the old Inhabitants of *Canaan* ; but being the most powerful among them, they had long given Name to the rest, *Gen.* xv. 16. And now the *Philistines* were thus subdued, none of them, who used to infest the *Israelites*, durst stir to give them any molestation, but sat quiet and still.

Ver.

Ver. 15. *And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his Life.*] From these Words Mr. Hobbs, and his Followers, draw an Argument, that this was written by somebody after the Death of Samuel. Which is a very weak Proof: For the sense may be no more than this; that Samuel was so diligent in the Discharge of his Office, that he gave himself no Rest, but fate to judge Causes every day.

Ver. 16. *And he went from Year to Year, in a Circuit, to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places.*] Ἐν παντί τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις τόποις, *In all these sanctified places,* as the LXX translates these last Words, (tho' there be no such thing in the Hebrew) because, as Mr. Mede conjectures, here were *Proseucha's*, i. e. Places of Prayer, in those ancient Days. But we may more certainly gather from hence, that there was no such High Court then established (which they call the *Sanhedrim* in following Ages) to judge all Causes; at least, not such inferior Courts, as were appointed by the Law in *Deut. xvi. 18.* as the High Court is in *Deut. xviii. 8.* For if there had, there would have been no need of Samuel's riding Circuit every year about the Country, to do Justice; as other Judges had done. *Judges v. 10. x. 4. xii. 14.*

Ver. 17. *And his Return was to Ramah; for there was his House, and there he judged Israel.*] The Power of the Judges was greatest in War: But when it was over, they still retained such an Authority, that all difficult Causes (at least) were brought before them. They were consulted also in all Political Affairs: And that they might know where to resort to Samuel, when he had ended his Circuit, he kept his constant station at Ramah.

And there he built an Altar unto the LORD.] There being no Declaration yet made, where God would have the Ark to be fixed, after the Destruction of Shiloh, he built an Altar where he himself constantly resided. Because it was fit, when they consulted about any publick Business, concerning the Good of the Commonwealth of Israel, that there should be a publick Invocation of God's Direction and Blessing: Which was done by Sacrifice, as appears from *ver. 9.*

C H A P. VIII.

Ver. 1. **A**ND it came to pass when Samuel was old.] The Jews in *Seder Olam Rabba*, and other Books, make Samuel to have lived no more than fifty two Years; when he could not be said to be old. Therefore *Abarbinel* forakes the Doctors in this, and shews their Proofs of it to be very weak; and thinks that he rather lived 'till he was Seventy, if not Eighty Years old. But less than Seventy, he affirms, none of the Prophets or good Men lived.

That he made his Sons Judges over Israel.] When he could not well sustain all the Labour, he took them to assist him: both when he went his Circuit, and in hearing Causes at home. Or, perhaps, when he was old, he went Circuit no more; but settled them in a con-

venient Place (as it follows in the next Verse) where People might have Justice done them, either by him, or by them.

Ver. 2. *Now the Name of his first-born was Joel, and the Name of his second Abijah; they were Judges in Beersheba.*] As his constant Residence was at Ramah; so he ordered theirs to be at Beersheba. Whereby, as *Corn. Bertram* observes, (*Cap. 9. de Repub. Jud.*) the Country was divided into two parts, for the greater Convenience of the People; that the Causes of all those who dwelt between Dan and Mount Ephraim, might be brought to be judged by Samuel at Ramah; and the Causes of those between Mount Ephraim and Beersheba, might be judged by his Sons.

Ver. 3. *And his Sons walked not in his Ways; but turned aside after Lucre, and took Bribes, and perverted Judgment.*] Covetousness made them take Bribes (contrary to the Law, *Exod. xviii. 8.*) and they made them pervert Judgment. See *Exod. xxiii. 21. Deut. xvi. 19. Procopius Gazæus* here asks this Question: Why God did not punish Samuel, as he did Eli, for the Wickedness of his Sons? Unto which he answers, that Samuel's Sons were not so bad as Eli's: For taking Bribes privately, was not like open profaning the Tabernacle, and making the Worship of God contemptible. And besides, it is possible Samuel might be ignorant of this Corruption in his Sons: Who did not live near him, but he in Ramah, and they at Beersheba.

Ver. 4. *And all the Elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah.*] All the great Men who were dissatisfied with the Management of Affairs, came to Ramah: Which was one of the Places where Samuel judged the People, and determined their Controversies, *vii. 16, 17.*

And they said unto him, Behold thou art old, and thy Sons walk not in thy ways, make us a King to judge us, like all the Nations.] The Weakness of Samuel's Body, and the ill Disposition of his Sons Minds, they make their pretence of demanding what they had long desired to have. The *Gemara* of the *Sanhedrim*, *Cap. 2. Sect. 6.* according to the Tradition of *R. Eliezer*, saith, the Elders were in the right, in desiring a King to judge them: For according to the Opinion of some of their Doctors, this was one of the three things God commanded to be done, when they came into Canaan, that they should make them a King. The only Error was, which arose, they say, from the Perverseness of the vulgar People, that they desired a King, like all the Nations. But these are mere Fancies; for God gave no such Command, as their best Authors, *Bechai, Nachman, Ralbeg*, and others acknowledge. But their own Pride and Vanity suggested these Desires to them, that they might not want that outward Pomp and Show which was among their Neighbours. Fear also of a potent Enemy, who was about to invade them, might make them think a King necessary to lead them on successfully to encounter him, (*ver. 20. and xii. 12.*) But above all, this proceeded from their Insensibility of the great Honour they enjoyed above all Mankind, in being under the peculiar Government of God: For whom they had so little Regard, that

that he saith, *ver. 7. they despised him* ; that is, made nothing of such a King as they could not see. But that he had the Supreme Power over them was apparent, in that when they prayed *Samuel* to make them a King, immediately he prayed to God ; shewing it was not in his power to do it, but in God alone.

Ver. 6. *But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a King to judge us ; and Samuel prayed unto the LORD.*] To give him Direction what to do in this case : But thus far the *Elders* were in the right, that they came to the Prophet to ask a King : For none, as I said, could make one, but the LORD alone, who was their Sovereign.

Ver. 7. *And the LORD said, Harken unto the Voice of the People, in all that they say unto thee.*] These are the Words of an angry Sovereign, (*Hosea xiii. 11.*) being as much as to say, Let them have their Will. Which he indulged to them, partly to punish them ; and partly to preserve them from Apostasy from their Religion. For being as violently set upon having a King after the manner of the *Egyptians*, as they had been to follow their Gods, they might have thrown off the Law itself, and conformed entirely to the Customs of other Nations, if they had not been humoured : For they were so set upon it, as appears from *ver. 19.* that after the Prophet had represented to them, how much they would lose by having their Desires granted, they persisted in them, saying : *Nay, but we will have a King, &c.* Which expresses a Resolution to have one whatsoever became of them.

For they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me ; that I should not reign over them.] These words shew, that *Samuel* took it very heavily, that they should be dissatisfied with his Government : But God tells him, he himself had more Reason to be angry ; for in truth, they had thrown off his Authority, who was their King : (as *Samuel* tells them afterwards *xii. 12.*) and therefore was highly offended they should desire any other. Which the *Jewish* Doctors abovemention'd (*ver. 5.*) justly make an Argument that God did not command them in the Book of *Deuteronomy* to make them a King ; because he was displeased when they desired to have one. For the Supreme LORD of the World was their Sovereign, who governed them by *Judges*, whom he raised up and extraordinarily inspired, when he saw occasion : As he had before conducted them by *Joshua* and *Moses*, who never ordained any thing of moment without a special Command for it from God : Who reserved to himself the sole Power of establishing Laws, and appointing Magistrates, and making War, as appears by the War against the *Midianites*, *Numb. xxxi.* For there is no truth in their Opinion, who imagine that the Government of the *Israelites*, before they had a King, was an *Aristocracy*. *Josephus* indeed seems to say so, in one or two places of his *Antiquities* : But in his Book against *Appion* (a very Learned Gentile) wherein he writes most accurately, he makes it a distinct Sort of Government, different from all other ; which he truly calls by a new Name, ΘΕΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ, *the Government of God*, lib. 2. For God exercised

the Supreme Authority among them, by his express Command. Which being without Example, that it may not seem incredible to those, who are wont to detract from the Sacred History, it may be fit to observe, (to use the words of *Hermannus Conringius*, in his Animadversions on *Machiavel's Princeps*, cap. vi.) that the Dæmons who were worshipped as Gods by the Gentiles, attempted to imitate this, by setting up a like Government. So that memorable History of the Original of the Commonwealth of the *Cyrenians* in *Egypt*, mentioned by *Diodorus Siculus*, *Strabo*, *Pausanias*, *Justin*, and others. And that History of the Beginning of *Heraclea* in *Pontus*, which *Justin* relates, *Lib. xvi. Cap. 3.* For this Republick being raised by the express Command of Dæmons, was upon that account, they say, exceeding flourishing. No less memorable is the Republick of the *Mexicans* in *America*, erected by the Command of their Dæmon *Vitzipultzi* ; who above all others endeavoured to imitate the Miracles wrought by God for the *Israelites*. Many others, he there shews, pretended to this ; tho' all was transacted by themselves.

Ver. 8. *According to all the works that they have done, since the day that I brought them out of Egypt, unto this day ; wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other Gods ; so do they also unto thee.*] No wonder they desired another sort of Ruler than *Samuel* ; for they had chosen other Gods. And this had been their wicked Humour ever since they were delivered from the Tyranny of *Pharaoh*.

Ver. 9. *Now therefore hearken unto their voice.*] Since they had no greater regard unto God, and his Minister ; he resolved to let them exchange his Government, for such an one as the Nations had ; who often oppressed them.

Howbeit, yet protest solemnly unto them : and shew them the manner of the King that shall reign over them.] He continuing still their King, God was so very gracious, as to order *Samuel* to lay before them at large, into what Servitude they were going to throw themselves by casting off the Government of *Judges* set over them by God himself ; and subjecting themselves to the Power of such Kings as ruled in other Nations.

Ver. 10. *And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people, that asked of him a King.*] How ill God took it, looking upon it as a rejection of himself ; who had hitherto governed them most graciously, and often delivered them from the heaviest Oppressions. For he either stirred up some Person, by an immediate signification of his will and pleasure, to be their Judge : Or when there was none, he was ready to rule their Proceedings himself, by *Urim* and *Thummim*, directing them what Course to follow, in the publick Concerns of the Nation. These two things plainly demonstrated (as our Mr. *Thorndike* hath well observed) that God was their King, whom they now cast off. See *Review of the Rights of the Church*, p. 68, 133.

Ver. 11. *And he said, This shall be the manner of the King that shall reign over you.*] And moreover he declared what kind of Government they chose, instead of God's. There are

various Opinions about the *Jus Regium*, the Royal Power here mentioned. Which containing divers Particulars that seem arbitrary and unjust, Interpreters have chosen to expound the Hebrew Word *Mishpat*, not by *jus*, but by *mos* and *consuetudo*; that is, not by *Right*, but by *Manner* and *Custom*. And so the Words may be translated, as *Joseph Scaliger* observed long ago from many Instances, (*Epist.* xv.) particularly *Gen.* xl. 13. and in this Book xxvii. 11. See *Petavius* also upon *Epiphanius*, *Hæres.* lv. N. 9. But there is no necessity of this, as *Grotius* rightly observes, and from him *Conringius*. For *Samuel* doth not speak of a just and honest Right of a King to do these things (for his Right is quite otherwise described, in that part of *Moses's* Law, which concerns the King's Duty) but such a Right as the Kings of the Nations had then acquired: For they desired such a King as their Neighbours had; who were all under the absolute Dominion of their Princes. Which *Aristotle* calls, *δεσποτικὴν ἀρχήν*. Lib. v. Polit. cap. 10. Οἱ περὶ τὴν Ἀσίαν ὑπομένουσιν μὲν δεσποτικὴν ἀρχήν, ἔδεν, δυσχεραίνουσι, *They of Asia endure a Despotick Government, nothing at all complaining.*

He will take your Sons, and appoint them for himself.] To attend him as the Guards of his Body, and in other Offices. This shews that he speaks of an arbitrary Power, which Kings in those days used. And therefore *Abarbinel* observes that *Samuel* doth not say absolutely, *I will shew you the Manner or Right of the King*, (as if it were a Right belonging to all Kings) but *that shall reign over you*; that is, of such a King as you desire, who will administer Affairs in this fashion.

For his Chariots, and to be his Horsemen.] To look after his Chariots and his Horses. For so the Word *Paras* signifies, (as *Lud. De Dieu*, and *Bochartus* have observed) and these Words should be thus translated, *For his Chariots and his Horses.*

And some shall run before his Chariots.] Be his Footmen.

Ver. 12. *And he will appoint him Captains over thousands, and Captains over fifties.]* Others should be disposed of to Military Offices, higher or lower, as pleased him, (xiv. 52.) who were to be perfectly subject to him, and displaced by him, when he thought good.

And will set them to ear his Ground, and to reap his Harvest.] Others should be made Husbandmen, to plough his Ground, and reap his Corn on his own Terms; when, perhaps, their Labour was necessary about their own Fields.

And to make him Instruments of War, and Instruments of his Chariots.] Others he would make Artificers: Which was not very agreeable to that Nation; who were inclined from their beginning, rather to look after the Breed of Cattle.

Ver. 13. *And he will take your Daughters to be Confectioners, and to be Cooks, and to be Bakers.]* He would exercise, he shews, as Arbitrary Power over the Women, as over the Men; whom he would make to serve in such Employments as he thought fit; either for nothing, or such Wages as he pleased to give them.

Ver. 14. *And he will take your Fields and your Vineyards, and your Olive-yards, even the best of*

them, and give them to his Servants.] Bestow them on such of his Courtiers as he thought good to raise to great Estates. Which is not to be understood, as if he should challenge a Right to take their Lands from them, (for the contrary appears from the Story of *Abab*, who without a very wicked Contrivance could not possess himself of *Naboth's* Vineyard) but that he should take the Fruit of them, when he thought it necessary, especially in time of War, to gratify his Soldiers. To this Case *Abarbinel* confines the Sense of these Words.

Ver. 15. *And he will take the tenth of your Seed, and of your Vineyards.]* This was part of the *Jus Regium* in the Eastern Countries, (see my Notes upon *Gen.* xxviii. 22.) to have the tenth part of the Fruit of the Land for the King's share: And if they contented themselves with this Portion, they were accounted good Kings. As *Cypselus* King of *Corinth*, is observed by *Aristotle* to have exacted no more of his Subjects than the Tenth of their Fruits. Such Capitations and Taxes, as *Bodinus* speaks, (Lib. vi. *de Republ.* cap. 2.) which are usual now, being unknown in those days.

And give to his Officers, and to his Servants.] This Revenue being brought into his Exchequer, he therewith paid his Bed-chamber-men, and other Servants, their Salaries. I call them *Bed-chamber-men*, because the Hebrew Word (which we translate *Officers*) signifies *Eunuchs*, (as the LXX here translate it) who commonly attended them in their Chambers. And it was the more grievous to have such Men maintained out of this Revenue, because they were Strangers: For it was not lawful for the *Jews* to make any of their Nation an Eunuch. This Revenue itself also proved a heavy Burden upon the *Jews*, because this tenth Part was exacted out of the remainder, after the tenth Part had been paid to the *Levites*, as *Kimchi* and *Abarbinel* observe.

Ver. 16. *And he will take your Men-servants, and your Maid-servants, and your goodliest young Men.]* The most beautiful and proper Persons he could find.

And your Asses, and put them to his Work.] Either at the Plough, or for Carriage, or any other Employment wherein they were necessary.

Ver. 17. *And he will take the tenth of your Sheep, and ye shall be his Servants.]* So subject to him, that if he pleased, they should be no better than his Slaves. I know none that hath discoursed this whole matter so perspicuously and fully, as the late Learned *Puffendorf*, whose Words I shall translate, as I find them in his Book, *De Rebus gestis Philippi*. This People, saith he, had hitherto lived under Governours raised up by Divine Instinct, who had exacted no Tribute of them, nor put them to any Charges. With which Government they being not contented, but desiring to have a King like other Nations, that should live in Pomp and Splendor, and keep standing Forces about him, to be ready to resist any Invasion: *Samuel* informs them, what it was they desired, that they might consider, when they understood it, whether they would persist in their Choice: If they would have a King magnificently attended, then he tells them, the King will take their Sons

Sons, and put them in his Chariots, &c. v. 11. If they would have him keep up constant Forces, then he must appoint them for Colonels and Captains, and employ those in his Wars, who were wont to follow their Family-Business, ver. 12. And since after the manner of other Kings he must keep a stately Court, they must be content that their Daughters (ver. 13.) should serve in several Offices; which the King would think below the Dignity of his Wives and Daughters. Many Ministers also in several Employments both in War and Peace, must have Salaries to support them; which must be paid out of their Fields and Vineyards, ver. 14. For which Services he tells them, the King will exact the Tenth of all belonging to them, that he may maintain his Royal Expences. In one word, if you will have a King, he must be maintained, after a Royal Manner, out of your Estates.

Ver. 18. *And ye shall cry out in that day, because of your King which you have chosen.*] This shews that in all the foregoing Verses, Samuel describes the uncontrollable Power which the Eastern Princes exercised over their Subjects; who were patiently to bear whatsoever their Princes imposed upon them, without any Power to help themselves. For, as *Grotius* observes, this *Mishpat* doth not signify a true Right, but such a Fact as hath *Effectum Juris*, (the Effect of Right) viz. an Obligation of not resisting: Which is the Reason that Samuel adds these Words; that the People loaded with intolerable Oppressions, should implore the Help of God, because there was no human Remedy left for their Relief. See Lib. 1. *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. 4. Sect. 3. This plainly confutes the Fancy of the Jews concerning their *Sanhedrim*, and their Power to scourge Princes: For as Samuel consulted no body in making a King, but God alone; so when he was made, he got such a Power, that it is ridiculous to think that High-Court could controul him.

And the LORD will not hear you in that day.] But leave them under this heavy Yoke; because they would not hearken unto him, when he represented to them what would be the Effect of that Power which they desired him to set over them.

Ver. 19. *Nevertheless the People refused to obey the Voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay, but we will have a King over us.*] This Description of the Government of the Eastern Kings, did not deter them from persisting in their Desires. But they peremptorily demanded a King, tho' Samuel told them, that this Demand was a throwing off the Government of God. Who always heard their Cry, when they were oppressed by their Enemies; but now would leave them without any Help, when they groaned under the Oppression of their Kings. Which Obstinacy, as an excellent Person of ours (*Dr. Jackson*) speaks, did prognosticate that incurable and desperate Disease, which had its fatal Crisis in their rejecting Christ: who was both Priest and Prophet, and their lawful King. In casting off whom, they could not but cast off God, that he should not reign over them. And so a great Admirer of his paraphraseth the

Seventh Verse of this Chapter: Let it not grieve thy Spirit, that they grow weary of thee: But let them have their Will, for so will they serve the LORD and thy Redeemer.

Ver. 20. *That we may be like all other Nations.*] Strange Blindness! that they could not see it was their singular Felicity, that they were not like other Nations: But had God for their Governor, who never failed, in time of need, to raise up Men of wonderful Worth, to be their Deliverers. It was their vain-glorious Humour therefore that made them think, they were inferior to other Nations, unless they saw a Prince set over them shining in Gold and Jewels, living in a sumptuous Palace, attended with Guards richly cloathed, appearing in great Pomp and State, as they did in other Countries; which they fancied would be for the Glory of their Land.

To judge us, and go out before us, and fight our Battels.] There was anciently a Respect to their Military Virtue, in the choice of their Kings; the very Word *R E X*, among the Romans, having its Original from their Abilities to govern Armies, and keep them in good Order and Discipline. Such were all those great Men whom God had raised up, as there was occasion, to judge *Israel*. Who had been so successful when they fought for them, that they were always victorious; which they could not promise themselves their Kings would be; the very first of which was slain in Battel.

Ver. 21. *And Samuel heard all the Words of the People, and rehearsed them in the Ears of the LORD.*] As he had told all the Words of the LORD unto the People, ver. 10.

Ver. 22. *And the LORD said unto Samuel, Harken unto their Voice, and make them a King.*] Such as they desired, like those of other Nations: For so it appears in the following History, many of them were, as Samuel had predicted. Witness the Words of the People to *Rehoboam*, concerning *Solomon's* Government, 1 Kings xii. 4. And the Tyrannical Words of *Jezebel* to *Abab* about *Naboth's* Vineyard, 1 Kings xxi. 7. And all the Violence of *Mannasseh*, who shed innocent Blood very much, till he had filled *Jerusalem* with it, 2 Kings xxi. 16. And what *David* himself did, in the matter of *Uriah*, when he had defiled his Wife, 2 Sam. xi. 15, 16.

And Samuel said unto the Men of Israel.] To the Elders of the People, who had attended him about this Matter.

Go ye every Man unto his City.] He bad them leave the Business unto him; and God, he doubted not, would set a King over them.

C H A P. IX.

Ver. 1. **N**OW there was a Man of Benjamin, whose Name was *Kish*, the Son of *Abiel*, the Son of *Zeror*, the Son of *Bechorath*, the Son of *Apiah* a Benjamite.] In this Genealogy there is no difficulty but one; which is, that in two places of the *Chronicles* it is said, that *Ner* begat *Kish*, 1 Chron. viii. 37. ix. 39. But by begetting there must be meant, the giving him his Breeding and Education. For it is evident

Ner was Kish his Brother, 1 Sam. xiv. 51. D. Kimchi will have it that he had two Names, Abiel and Ner.

A mighty Man of Power.] This seems not to be meant of his Wealth or Interest in his Country (for Saul himself saith, he was of a mean Family, ver. 21.) but of his great Strength, Courage, and Fortitude; which is therefore mentioned, because it hath been often observed, that *fortes creantur fortibus.*

Ver. 2. *And he had a Son whose Name was Saul, a choice young Man, and a goodly; and there was not among the Children of Israel a goodlier Person than he: From his shoulders and upwards he was higher than any of the People.]* They desired a King like the rest of the Nations, who look'd upon Persons of an heroick Stature and Countenance, to be mark'd out for Empire. Whence the Saying of Euripides, Εἶδος ἀξίου τυραννίδος; and that of Curtius, *Quippe hominibus barbaris in corporum maiestate veneratio est.* But no Words are more memorable, to this purpose, than those of Pliny, in the Conclusion of his fourth Chapter of his Panegyrick to Trajan; where he saith, the Strength and Tallness of his Body, the Nobleness of his Aspect, the Dignity of his Mouth, the Gracefulness of his Speech, &c. *Nonne longe lateque principem ostentant?* Do they not every where proclaim a Prince? This was a thing so carefully provided for in ancient Times, to have a goodly Race of Kings, that the Lacedemonians set a Fine upon their King Archidamus (as Plutarch tells us in the beginning of his Book, περί παιδῶν ἀγωγῆς) for marrying a Wife of a low Stature; who was likely to bring them, ὁ βασιλέας ἀλλὰ βασιλίσκους, not Kings but Kinglings, to reign over them.

Ver. 3. *And the Asses of Kish, Saul's Father, were lost.]* Wandered out of their Pasture.

And Kish said unto Saul his Son, Take now one of the servants with thee, and arise, go and seek the Asses.] It is no wonder that he was employed in this Enquiry, for I suppose he had the Charge of looking after his Father's Cattle; which was an Employment the greatest Men did not disdain in antient Time: As we learn from the History of Hercules and Paris, and others among the Greeks. And in Judea Asses were a considerable part of their Substance: For the greatest Persons rode upon Asses 'till the time of Solomon, when Horses began to be multiplied. Judg. x. 4.

Ver. 4. *And they passed thro' Mount Ephraim, and they passed thro' the Land of Shalisha, but they found them not; then they passed thro' the Land of Shalim, and there they were not, &c.]* They searched, that is, all the mountainous Country of the Tribe of Ephraim, which lay next to Benjamin, after they had first gone thro' that Tribe, as it here follows:

And they passed thro' the Land of Benjamin, &c.] Or, they had passed thro' the Land of Benjamin; where hearing no Tidings of them, they went into the next Country, to see if they were stray'd thither.

Ver. 5. *And when they were come to the Land of Zuph.]* A Territory in the Tribe of Ephraim, where some of Samuel's Ancestors had lived, (i. 1.) and Ramah, where Samuel now dwelt,

seems to have been in it; as we may gather from the next Verse.

Saul said to his servant that was with him, Come, let us return.] Being uncertain whither to go next, after they had sought so many places in vain.

Lest my Father leave caring for the Asses, and take thought for us.] Be afraid that we are lost. The Hebrew Word, as Dr. Hammond observes (upon Psal. xxxviii. 18.) signifies Solicitude of Mind, mixed with Grief and Sorrow.

Ver. 6. *And he said unto him, Behold now, there is in this City a Man of God.]* A Prophet.

And he is an honourable Man.] A Person of great Fame, and held in high Esteem.

All that he saith comes surely to pass.] Which procured him such Honour.

Now let us go thither, peradventure he will shew us our way we shall go.] To find the Asses.

Ver. 7. *Then said Saul to his servant, But, behold, if we go, what shall we bring the Man?* This was a part of the Honour they did to Great Men, in those Countries, to make them a Present, when they had occasion to address themselves to them. Particularly Prophets were thus honoured; being *Men of God*: before whom they were not to appear empty. Thus also they demonstrated their Reverence to their King, in the next Chapter of this Book, ver. 27.

For the Bread is spent in our Vessels, and there is not a Present to bring to the Man of God: What have we? Provision for their Table was as acceptable a Present as Money: Which appears from what Jeroboam's Wife brought to Abijah the Prophet, 1 Kings xiv. 3.

Ver. 8. *And the servant answered Saul again, and said, Behold, I have here at hand a fourth part of a shekel of silver, that will I give to the Man of God, to tell us our way.]* A small Present, but as acceptable as the Widow's Mite; being all they had left in their Travels.

Ver. 9. *Before time in Israel, when a Man went to enquire of God.]* By consulting a Prophet.

Thus he spake, Come, let us go to the Seer: For he that is now called a Prophet, was before time called a Seer.] Tho' the word *Nabi*, (a Prophet) had been antiently known, as appears by the Books of Moses; and used in Samuel's Days, as appears from many places in this Book; yet the more common Word, which now prevailed, when Saul was anointed King (for in all Languages Words are in and out of fashion, in several times) was *Roeb* (a Seer.) But in following Years, when Samuel wrote this Book, *Nabi* was become the more usual Word in all Mens mouths. This is a fair Account of these Words, from whence some argue that Samuel was not the Author of this Book, nor Moses the Author of the Pentateuch: Where Abraham is called *Nabi*, (xx. 7.) which shews that this was no new Word in these days, as they would have this place understood. But it might be sufficient to answer unto this, that *Nabi* did not signify in antient times, one that foretold things to come; but only one that was familiar with God, and was instructed in his Will, that he might instruct others. But now in Samuel's time

time it came to be appropriated to the revealing future things, and foretelling what should come to pass, or revealing Secrets, which none could know but God.

Ver. 10. *Then said Saul to his servant, Well said, let us go : so they went to the City, where the Man of God dwelt.]* That is, to Ramah.

Ver. 11. *And as they went up the Hill to the City, they found young Maidens going down to draw Water.]* At the Fountain, which (as usual) was at the bottom of the Hill.

And said unto them, Is the Seer here?] Of which there might be some doubt ; because some time he was wont to go Circuit about the Country.

Ver. 12. *And they answered them, and said, He is ; Behold, he is before you, make haste now.]* That is, they could not fail to find him, if they lost no time, but went speedily to the City, before he went to sacrifice ; when it would not be proper to interrupt him.

For he came to-day to the City.] He either lived without the Gate of the City ; or returned from his Country Circuit.

For there is a Sacrifice of the People to-day.] Either at some solemn Festival (the *New Moon* some imagine) or upon some special Occasion of Prayer and Thanksgiving to God ; for the People of that City, or for all *Israel*.

In the High-place.] All Sacrifices were regularly to be offered before the Ark, in the place which the LORD should chuse. But while this Choice stood suspended, because *Shiloh* was laid desolate, and no other place appointed ; they sacrificed in other places, where neither the Ark nor the Tabernacle were : The Tabernacle being void of the Ark, which was its principal Furniture ; and the Ark being without an House for God to dwell in. What Place then, in this Condition, could be more commodious, than those Cities where the Priests and Levites lived ; to which the People went for Instruction ? and they chose the highest Parts of those Cities for this purpose. *Corn. Bertram, (Cap. 11. de Repub. Jud.)* imagines, that from this Example High-places came to be in use in After-ages, (unless we suppose them to be the Relicks of the *Canaanites*, or more antient People) for this is the first time we read of an High-place among the People of God. Yet we read before of the thing, tho' not of the Name. See *Judges vi. 20. xiii. 19.* and so early as *Abraham's* time we read (*Gen. xxii.*) he was directed to Mount *Moriab* to offer his Son. The same learned Man also thinks, that this was the beginning of *Synagogues* and *Schools*, as our Mr. *Thorndike* doth in his *Religious Assembly*, p. 29. For tho' when the Ark was settled, it became unlawful to offer Sacrifices in High-places ; yet it was no offence to continue there for publick Prayer, and the Praises of God, and the Learning of the Law.

The *Jewish* Doctors take this *High-place* to have been some House, where after they had sacrificed, they feasted when they had done. And so the *Targum* here translates these words, *the House of Feasting.*

Ver. 13. *As soon as ye be come into the City, you shall straightway find him.]* For on this day he appeared publickly.

Before he go up to the High-place to eat, for the People will not eat until he come ; because he doth bless the Sacrifice.] That is, the Feast upon the Sacrifice. Which were Peace-offerings ; the greatest part wherof belonged to him that brought the Sacrifice ; wherewith he entertained his Friends.

And afterward they eat that he bidden.] The Guests of him that offered the Sacrifice ; who, at this time, I suppose, was *Samuel*. For God having told him, that he should that day see the Man, whom he intended for their King, it is likely he appointed more Sacrifices to be added unto those which were usually offered at such times, at his own Charge. That there might be the greater Feast, unto which he invited the People, (*ver. 24.*) that is, the principal of the People, and placed the Guests (*ver. 22.*) and carved at the Table, (*ver. 23.*) which are all Tokens that he was at the Expence of the Sacrifice, and made this Feast for his Friends.

Ver. 14. *And they went up into the City ; and when they were come into the City, behold Samuel came out against them, for to go to the High-place.]* Met them directly in his way to the Feast : For so God in his Providence had disposed things, as it follows in the next Words.

Ver. 15. *Now the LORD had told Samuel in his Ear, a day before Saul came, saying.]* In the Hebrew the Words are, *He revealed or uncovered the Ear of Samuel* ; as is noted in the Margin. Now that was done in order to tell him something : and therefore the meaning is, God told him a Secret ; using, in all likelihood, a whispering Voice.

Ver. 16. *To-morrow about this time, I will send thee a Man out of the Land of Benjamin.]* This shews still, that all was done by God's direction.

And thou shalt anoint him to be Captain over my People Israel, that he may save my People out of the hand of the Philistines.] Who had grievously oppressed them for forty Years together : And tho' driven out of the Country by *Samuel*, yet were ready to invade them again ; as they did, it appears, by the following History.

For I have looked upon my People, because their Cry is come unto me.] Tho' he would not hear their Cry to relieve them from the Oppression of their Kings, (*viii. 18.*) yet he was so gracious as to make those Kings Instruments of their Deliverance from the Oppression of their cruel Neighbours.

Ver. 17. *And when Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said unto him.]* With such a low Voice as he heard the Day before, *ver. 15.*

Behold the Man whom I spake to thee of, this same shall reign over my People.] The Word we translate *Reign*, signifies something of Coercion, and Restraint, as is observed in the Margin : And denotes he should rule them with an absolute uncontrollable Power, sternly and rigidly, after the manner of the *Eastern* Monarchs. Which was, as I said, a Punishment for throwing off the kind and gentle Government of God.

Ver. 18. *Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the Gate.]* He came up to him, as he was going out of his House.

And

And said, Tell me, I pray thee, where the Seer's House is.] It is an Argument that Saul had led a very private Life, since he had never seen Samuel, who went about into so many places to judge the People.

Ver. 19. *And Samuel answered Saul and said, I am the Seer, go up before me unto the High-place.]* This seems to be spoken out of Respect to him.

For thou shalt eat with me to-day, and to-morrow I will let thee go, and tell thee all that is in thine Heart.] All that he desired to know. This shews it was a Supper, not a Dinner, to which he invited him; otherwise he might have dismissed him as well after Dinner, as the next Morning: But the Custom of that Country was to make their Entertainment in the Evening, when Business was over.

Ver. 20. *And as for thy Asses which were lost three days ago.]* This satisfied him he was a Prophet, that he knew what he came to him for, tho' he had not told him.

Set not thy mind on them, for they are found.] He frees his mind from all care about the Asses; that he might eat and drink the more cheerfully at the Feast.

And on whom is all the Desire of Israel? is it not on thee, and on all thy Father's House?] The meaning is, all Israel desire a King, and there is none fitter for it than thy self; whose Family God is resolved to advance.

Ver. 21. *And Saul answered and said, Am I not a Benjamite, of the smallest of the Tribes of Israel? and my Family the least of all the Families of the Tribe of Benjamin?]* He thought no Person more unfit for the Dignity; both because the Tribe of which he was, had been lamentably impaired in the time of the Judges (Chap. xx.) and his own Family was very inconsiderable in this little Tribe.

Wherefore then speakest thou so unto me?] He concluded therefore, that Samuel did but jest with him.

Ver. 22. *And Samuel took Saul, and his Servants, and brought them into the Parlour; and made them sit in the chiefest Place among them that were bidden.]* He convinced him he was in earnest, by setting him uppermost at the Table, in the most honourable Place among the Guests.

Which were about thirty Persons.] The principal Persons, I suppose, of the City; who were Witnesses of the extraordinary Respect which he paid him.

Ver. 23. *And Samuel said unto the Cook, Bring the Portion which I gave thee, of which I said, Set it by thee.]* The Master of the Feast distributed to every one their Portion; or ordered what Dish should be set before them: And Samuel had commanded the Cook (before they sat down) not to set one Dish upon the Table, but keep it 'till he called for it.

Ver. 24. *And the Cook took up the Shoulder, and that which was upon it.]* The Left Shoulder and Breast: For the Right Shoulder and the Right Breast belonged to the Priest, *Levit. vii. 33, 34.*

And set it before Saul.] As the principal place was given him at the Feast, so the principal Dish also was set before him; to express still the great Regard he had to his Person.

And Samuel said, Behold that which is left.] Reserved on purpose for his Entertainment.

Set it before thee and eat.] Let it stand, as it is set before thee, and eat of it, as thy Portion.

For unto this time hath it been kept for thee, since I said, I have invited the People.] The plainest Translation of these Words, is that of *Lud. de Dieu*; Eat, because till this appointed time it hath been reserved for thee, when I said I have invited certain Persons. That is, besides the thirty Persons, he told the Cook he had invited some others (which was Saul and his Attendant) for whom he would have this Shoulder to be reserved. For by inviting *the People*, he understands only these two Persons; the word *People* sometimes signifying (as he shews) very few. He thinks indeed the Feast was not made by Samuel, who brought along with him only these two Guests: But that seems to me, not to agree with the whole Story.

And Saul did eat with Samuel that day.] Who entertained him very nobly; for the Left Shoulder was always accounted the best part of the Sacrifice: Being the same with that which the Priest had for his Portion. And therefore set before the King, if he was present at the Feast, and thence called by *Josephus* Μνῆς Βασιλικῆς, *The Royal Portion*: For the Arm and Shoulder, as *Philo* discourses, were the Symbols of Strength and Fortitude.

Ver. 25. *And when they were come down from the High-place into the City, Samuel communed with Saul upon the top of the House.]* Concerning his Advancement to the Royal Dignity, and his Administration of the Government.

Ver. 26. *And they rose up early. And it came to pass about the Spring of the day.]* Before the People of the Place were stirring.

That Samuel called Saul to the top of the house, saying, Up, that I may send thee away.] According to his Promise, ver. 19.

And Saul arose, and they went out both of them, he and Samuel abroad. For Samuel intended, out of Respect to him, to conduct him part of his way. But went without any of his usual Attendants; that what he did, might, for the present, be kept a Secret.

Ver. 27. *And as they were going down to the End of the City, Samuel said to Saul, Bid thy Servant pass on before us, (and he passed on) but stand thou still a while, that I may shew thee the Word of the LORD.]* Which he would have none to hear, but himself: Because he now meant only to give him private Satisfaction, that God had chosen him to be the King of his People; before whom afterwards he was publicly chosen by Lot.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. **T**HEN Samuel took a Vial of Oil.] It was the Business of a Prophet to anoint a King, as *Abarbinel* observes upon *Exodus xxx.* Which he proves from this Example of Samuel's anointing Saul, and afterwards David; and Nathan's anointing Solomon, and the Prophet (which the Hebrew Doctors say was *Jonah*) anointing *Jehu*, 2 Kings ix. 1, 6.

This

This Unction seems to have been made in the open Fields : But that it was done at a Fountain, because *Solomon* was there anointed, cannot be proved (as the *Hebrew Doctors* would have it) from that single Instance ; which will not make a general Rule. Nor can it be proved, that this was Sacred Oil taken from the Tabernacle, but rather Common : For *Samuel* was no Priest, and therefore could not meddle with that which was kept there ; nor was he now near unto that place.

And poured it upon his Head.] There is no Order of God, that we read of, for the anointing of Kings : But it had been an ancient Custom, two hundred Years before this time, as appears from the Parable of *Jotham*. See on *Judges ix. 8.* And it was now used by *Samuel*, that their King might be like the Kings of other Nations, as they desired. In after-times they were far superior to them, if we may believe the *Hebrew Doctors* ; who say the Family of *David* had the Privilege to be anointed with the same holy Oil, wherewith the High-Priest was anointed. For tho' the Law appropriated it unto him, yet there was a Dispensation with the Law, manifested by some Prophet. For certain it is, that *Solomon* was anointed with Oil taken from the Tabernacle, *1 Kings i. 39.* Only they say there was a difference in the Form of anointing : The King being anointed in the Form of a Crown incircling his Head ; but the High-Priest in the Form of a Cross, by one Line drawn with the Oil running down his Forehead, and by another drawn by the Oil between his Eye-brows : Which they call in the Form of the *Greek Letter Chi*, having no mind to mention the name of the Cross. See *Selden's Titles of Honour*, p. 144. *De Success. Pontific.* lib. 2. cap. 9. *Schickard's Jus Regium*, cap. 1. Theorem. 4.

And kissed him.] In token of Subjection and Reverence to him : According to the custom of antient times (see *Gen. xli. 40.*) and in those following, *Psal. ii. 12.* This the *Jews* call *Neshikah Shel Gedolah*, the Kiss of Greatness or Majesty ; in our Language, the Kiss of Homage.

And said, Is it not because the LORD hath anointed thee to be Captain over his Inheritance ?] That is, doubt not, but by Authority from God thou art made the Ruler of his People. This was a thing not easily to be believed, and therefore he gives him *three* or *four* Signs, in the following Verses, to confirm his Faith. But it must not be imagined, that now he was inaugurated ; for that was done afterwards, according to this prophetic Prediction : Which was kept so private, that it shewed he intended no more now, than to assure *Saul* he should be made King, and publicly install'd their Sovereign.

Ver. 2. *And when thou art departed from me to-day, thou shalt find two Men by Rachel's Sepulchre, in the border of Benjamin, at Zelaah : and they will say unto thee, The Asses which thou wentest to seek are found ; and lo, thy Father, &c.]* He foretelling *Saul* so exactly, how many Persons he should meet, and the Place where, and what they would say to him, was an Argument that he was a Prophet ; and therefore was to be believed in what he said to him

from God concerning the Kingdom. *Rachel's Sepulchre* was in the way to *Bethlehem*, (*Gen. xxxv.*) which was in the Tribe of *Judah*, but in the Border of *Benjamin*.

Ver. 3. *Then shalt thou go on forward from thence, and thou shalt come to the Plain of Tabor : and there shall meet thee three Men going up to God to Bethel.]* This had been a Religious Place ; ever since the Days of *Jacob* : as if by God's Appearance to him there, it had been consecrated for Prayer and Sacrifice : And the Tabernacle being now without the Ark, and the Ark in no determined place, they sacrificed in High-places (as *Samuel*, we read, did in the foregoing Chapter) and particularly here at *Bethel* ; where *Jeroboam* afterwards settled one of his Calves. But *Fortunatus Scacchus* thinks it no improbable Conjecture, that they had no Altar ; but sacrificed upon the bare Ground. *Myrothec. Elæochrism. Sacr. Lib. 2. cap. 5.*

One carrying three Kids, and another three Loaves, and another carrying a Bottle of Wine.] Intending to offer Sacrifices of Peace-offerings.

Ver. 4. *And they will salute thee, and give thee two Loaves of Bread ; which thou shalt receive at their Hands.]* This may be look'd upon as a Third Sign, or an Appendix to the Second. And it is the more remarkable ; because this Present which they made him, was a Figure of that Honour which the People did him, when he was declared their King. And if these Loaves were two of the three, which they were going to offer in Sacrifice, (as some think they were) the Present was the more noble. But tho' this may be justified, by supposing them to be given to one that was faint with travelling, and which they might recruit at *Bethel* ; yet we may as well think, as *Kimchi* doth, that they were two Loaves which they brought along with them for their own use in their Journey. Which they freely imparted unto *Saul* ; and *Samuel* bid him not refuse ; but learn thereby, when he had abundance, to be kind to those who were in want.

Ver. 5. *After that thou shalt come to the Hill of God.]* So called, because they were wont to sacrifice here ; or because here was a School of the Prophets, who were called *Men of God*. Some take this to be *Gibeah*, others *Kirjath-jearim*.

Where is a Garrison of the Philistines.] This makes it probable the Hill before mentioned was *Geba*, or *Gibeah* : For there they had a Garrison, *xiii. 3.* which doth not contradict what was said, *vii. 13.* For tho' the *Philistines* were subdued, and made no Invasions upon the *Israelites* while *Samuel* lived ; yet they might retain some Strong-holds, out of which they could not drive them.

And it shall come to pass when thou art come thither to the City, that thou shalt meet a Company of Prophets.] Here it seems was a College of Prophets, settled for the Instruction of Youth in the Knowledge of the Law and of Piety, (who were called the *Sons of the Prophets*) where tho' the *Philistines* also had a Garrison, yet in this they were better than many Christians (as *Grotius* observes) for they spared those Places (when they conquered them) where learned Men lived, and were dedicated to the Study of

of Religion. See *Lib. 3. de Jure Beili & Pacis*, Cap. 11. Sect. 10.

Coming down from the High-place.] Perhaps they came from a Sacrifice, which had been offered in the High-place: And now praised God for his Benefits, in the following manner.

With a Psaltery, and a Tabret, and a Pipe, and an Harp before them.] With variety of Instrumental Musick; among which the *Nevel* (which we translate *Psaltery*) was the chief: Having it's Name, as the *Jewish* Doctors fancy (in the *Midrash*, upon *Psalms* lxxxi.) from hence; that it put down all other Instruments of Musick, as much as a wife Man doth a Fool. *Bartoloccius* in his *Kirjath-Sepher*, Pars 2. Fol. 185, &c. gives an Account of this, and the rest of the Instruments here mentioned. With which I do not think fit to trouble the Reader; but only note, that this Musick was used in Prophecy, because the Minds of the Prophets were thereby composed, and made apt to receive soft and good Impressions; as *Grotius* here observes from many Examples.

And they shall prophesy.] Sing the Praises of God, as the word *Prophecy* sometimes signifies, *Exod. xv. 21. 1 Chron. xxv. 3.* In what manner this was done, it is not so easy for us now to define, or specify (as *Mr. Mede* speaks.) But one of them seems to have been the *Præcentor*, to usher in the Verse or Ditty; and the rest to have answered, *Τὰ ἀκροτελεύτια*, the Extrems, or last Words of the Verse. See him, Book 1. Discourse 16. p. 78.

Ver. 6. *And the Spirit of God shall come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them.*] This was the highest Assurance of all the rest, that *Samuel* anointed him by God's Authority. Who vouchsafed suddenly to inspire him with such Thoughts and Affections, that he became like one of them, viz. a *Psalmist*: Able in an Instant to compose Hymns in the Praises of God; or to accompany them in their Melodies, which he had never learnt. For he was not bred in the School of the Prophets.

And shalt be turned into another Man.] Endued with extraordinary Prudence, and Courage, and such like Qualities, as fitted him for the Government and Conduct of God's People.

Ver. 7. *And let it be, when these signs are come unto thee, that thou do as occasion shall serve thee.*] As if he had said, I cannot give thee particular Rules about every thing that is to be done by thee: But doubt not to undertake the Government of the People; for God's Spirit shall guide thee to do that which the present occasion requires.

For God is with thee.] Be confident of good Success in all thy Undertakings, for God will be with thee, when thou goest out against thine Enemies. The *Chaldee* Paraphrase understands the foregoing Words, as if he had said, *make all things belonging to a King*, and then adds, *for the WORD of the LORD will be thy help*.

Ver. 18. *And thou shalt go down before me to Gilgal.*] A Place which had been famous for many great things done there, when they first came to *Canaan*: And lay conveniently for all the Tribes beyond *Jordan* to meet, now they dwelt there.

And behold, I will come down to thee, to offer Burnt-offerings, and to sacrifice Sacrifices of Peace-offerings: seven days shalt thou tarry till I come unto thee, and shew thee what thou shalt do.] This looks like another Sign which he gave him, of God's Presence with him, in future times, if he were obedient to his Commands. For it cannot be understood of his going immediately to *Gilgal*; and staying there seven Days: For the People were first to be called together to *Mizpeh*, where he was made King, ver. 17. and after the Defeat of the *Ammonites*, he was confirmed in the Kingdom at *Gilgal*, xi. 14, 15. And then the next Year, a War breaking out with the *Philistines*, all the People met at *Gilgal*, and *Saul* with them; waiting for *Samuel* to come, as he had appointed, to offer Sacrifice: Which *Saul*, being impatient of staying so long for him, offered himself, &c. (xii. 4, 8; 9.) and thereby forfeited God's Favour; whose Prophet had assured him he would not fail to come to meet him here. But then, these Words must not be pointed as they are now; but as the *Hebrew* Text will bear: Retaining the same Words, and only altering the Pause or Point in this manner; *Thou shalt go down before me to Gilgal, and behold I will come unto thee to offer Burnt-offerings, and to sacrifice Sacrifices of Peace-offerings, seven days.* Here is to be a Pause: and then another Sentence begins thus, *Thou shalt tarry till I come unto thee, &c.* As if he had said, See in any case that thou tarry till I come, and show thee what thou shalt do. Which *Samuel* perhaps knew not himself, at present: But intended to ask Counsel of God; and being fully instructed in this great Business, then come to consecrate him (as *Dr. Jackson* conjectures) and establish him in his Kingdom: By a solemn Sacrifice for seven Days, such as *Solomon* used at the Consecration of the Temple. See his *Third Sermon* on *Jerem. xxvi. 19.* and the very same he repeats in his Book of the *Knowledge of Jesus Christ*, Chap. 17. Paragr. 4.

Ver. 9. *And it was so, when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart; and all these signs came to pass that day.*] So great was the Goodness of God, that he immediately fulfilled the Last and Chief of these Signs: For he was no sooner gone to *Samuel*, but he felt another Spirit come into him of Wisdom, and Fortitude, to qualify him for the Government of God's People. Which afterwards God took away from him, because of his Sins, xvi. 14. See *Psalms* li. 12.

Ver. 10. *And when he came thither to the hill, behold, a Company of Prophets met him; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he prophesied among them.*] He mentions not the other Signs particularly, because they were not of such general Concernment unto others; but for his own Satisfaction: Whereas this of the Prophet's meeting him, and his Conversion into a Prophet, was of great and universal Concernment; to make the People reverence him as their King, when they heard how God had honoured him with such an extraordinary Gift from Heaven.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, when all that knew him beforetime, saw, that behold he prophesied*

phesied among the Prophets, then the People said one to another; *what is this that is come unto the Son of Kish? Is Saul also among the Prophets?*] It begat Wonder in all those who knew his Education, that he should on a sudden be inspired as they were, who were bred up in the School of the Prophets: For tho' it was in the power of God alone to bestow the Gift of Prophecy upon Men, yet commonly he endowed none with it, but such as were trained up in those Studies, which might dispose them for it. For had it been usual to invest those with this Spirit, who had not been educated in such a Course as might fit them to receive it, we cannot think it would have been so great a marvel now, as to give rise to this Proverb. Which must not be understood, as *Procopius Gazæus* observes, as if *Saul* had perpetually the Gift of Prophecy: But that he received such a Spiritual Gift, whereby he at present prophesied; and was endued with Prudence also to govern the People of God. Thus the LXX Elders, who were to assist *Moses*, prophesied; but not always. It is observed by *Erasmus*, That this became a Proverb, when they saw, *aliquam indecenter alieno gregi admixtum*, any Man indecently mingled with Company that were Strangers to him. Or, when they saw a sudden Change wrought in any Person; as *Gregory Nazianzen* applied it when he was chosen a Bishop, *Saul prophesied, so much beyond expectation, and when no body thought of it, that the Miracle became a Proverb.*

Ver. 12. *And one of the same place, answered and said, But who is their Father?*] This Wonder was presently satisfied, by a prudent Person among them, who bad them consider, who it was that made Prophets: Not Men, nor merely good Education, but God alone; who was the Father of all the Children of the Prophets (*i. e.* of their Disciples) to teach them by his Spirit. Which he could bestow when he pleased, upon any Man, and make him a Prophet; without the help of any other Master: Which was the cause of *Amos*, vii. 14. And that is the meaning of the word *Father* in this place; which signifies the same with *Master*, or *Teacher*. See upon *Gen.* iv. 20, 21.

Ver. 13. *And when he made an end of prophesying, he came to the High-place.*] Herein he differed from the Prophets who met him; that he prophesied but for a short time, this not being his Office: And when he had done, he went up to the High-place from whence they came down. Where was, I suppose, a place of Worship, unto which he went up, to give thanks to God for his Gifts; and to pray to him to prosper him in the Government he designed for him.

Ver. 14. *And Saul's Uncle.*] Who met him here in the High-place; or in his way home.

Said unto him and to his Servant, Whither went ye?] How came you to stay so long before your return?

And he said, to seek the Asses, and when we saw that they were no where.] In no place where they sought them.

We came to Samuel.] To be informed by him.

Ver. 15. *And Saul's Uncle said, Tell me, I pray thee, what Samuel said unto you?*] What Discourse they had with him.

Ver. 16. *And Saul said unto his Uncle, He told us plainly that the Asses were found. But of the matter of the Kingdom whereof Samuel spake, he told him not.*] Lest he should seem to have been seeking so high a Dignity: And because hitherto *Samuel* thought fit it should be kept a Secret between them two.

Ver. 17. *And Samuel called the People together.*] How long after he departed from *Samuel*, we are not told; but now resolved to declare God's choice of *Saul* to be their King, more publickly.

Unto the LORD to Mizpeh.] Which was a very famous Place, where they used to meet upon great Occasions, (see *Chap.* vii.) and God was pleased to be present (as hath been before observed) wheresoever there was a general Assembly of his People, for the common Good. See upon *Judges* xx. 1. Yet one cannot well imagine, that every Person of the whole Body of all *Israel* was called hither unto this Convention: But by the *People* we are to understand all the Elders and Heads of their Tribes, who governed and represented the rest: And accordingly that which follows, is to be interpreted.

Ver. 18. *And said unto the Children of Israel, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you out of the hands of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all Kingdoms of them that oppressed you.*] He commemorates the Benefits they received from him, ever since they were in *Egypt*; from whence he brought them; and suffered none of the Kingdoms that lay in their way to *Canaan*, to obstruct their Passage: And since they came there, delivered them from many heavy Oppressions.

Ver. 19. *And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your Adversities and Tribulations.*] By raising up *Judges* whensoever they cried to him for help: Who never fail'd to conquer all their Enemies.

And ye have said unto him, Nay.] When he desired them to continue under his Government, they refused, and would not be denied what they asked.

But set a King over us.] They would not any longer be governed by God, but have a King settled over them; to whom they might resort for help.

Now therefore present your selves before the LORD by your Tribes, and by your Thousands.] Into which their Tribes were divided. This was a wonderful Obstinacy and Stupidity, that after God had given them time to consider, what it was they desired, and what difference there was between his Government, and that of the Kings round about them, they should not relent; but persist to the last in their Resolution; and imagine that a King could save them, tho' God was not with them.

Ver. 20. *And when Samuel had caused all the Tribes of Israel to draw near.*] Unto the Place where the Lots were to be drawn, in the presence of the Heads of their Tribes and Families, who represented all the rest.

The Tribe of Benjamin was taken.] This is a Phrase used in the vii. of *Joshua*, about the Discovery of him, who had offended in the accursed thing: which all agree was by Lots. And so *Rasi*, and *Rabag* understand it here: Though *Kimchi* imagines God told them by *Urim* and *Thummim*, out of what Tribe and Family their King should be taken. Which is not probable, because the Ark was not now at *Mizpeh*; before which the High-priest was to stand, when he consulted the Divine Majesty by *Urim* and *Thummim*.

Ver. 21. *When he caused the Tribe of Benjamin to draw near by their Families, the Family of Matri was taken, and Saul the Son of Kish was taken.]* The Holy Writer shortens this Account of casting Lots: But it is pretty evident, they were cast four times: In the first the Tribe of Benjamin was taken: In the second the Family of *Matri* in that Tribe was taken. But there being several Households in that Family, it was cast a third time, that they might know in what House their King was, and that of *Kish* was taken: And in his House by a new Lottery, *Saul* was taken: And he took this course, as to prevent all Dispute; so to give him the greater Authority over them, as a Person divinely appointed; according to what God had said, *Deut. xix. 15*. And it is very observable, that *Plato* himself acknowledges a Government appointed by Lots to be *Θεοφιλή ἀρχήν*, a Government beloved of God, *lib. 4. de Legibus*.

Here Interpreters are wont to enquire why their first King should be chosen out of the smallest Tribe, sprung from the youngest Son of *Jacob*, and out of the smallest Family in this Tribe: Especially since *Judah* all along had the Preheminence among his Brethren, and the great King was promised to spring from him. To which this seems to be a reasonable Satisfaction; that this King being extorted by their undutiful Importunities, and given them in Anger (as I before observed) God was pleased to express his dislike of it, by this Choice: Whereby he also intended to take them off, from depending on their King (whose Power was small) so much as on himself.

And when they sought him, he could not be found.] Having withdrawn himself, either out of Feebleness of Spirit (as some think) or rather, out of Modesty, he declined so high an Authority, unless imposed upon him: Or, perhaps, being affrighted when he heard *Samuel* still representing God as offended with them, for asking a King; which was to reject his Government.

Ver. 22. *Therefore they enquired of the LORD further, if the Man should come thither: and the LORD answered.]* From hence *Abarbinel* argues, That God directed them, both by Lot, and by *Urim* and *Thummim*. Which if it be true, then, though the Ark was not there, yet they enquired of the LORD in the usual way, and he was pleased to give Answers any where, in great and weighty Cases. As *Abiathar* enquired of the LORD with the *Ephod* for *David*, at *Keliab* and at *Ziklag. xxiii. 9. xxx. 7*.

Behold he hath hid himself among the stuff.] Or, among the Carriages. Here the Jews ob-

serve, that *whosoever flies dominion, him dominion follows*. For when they told *Saul* he was chosen King, he said he was not fit for that Office, and bid them enquire again by *Urim* and *Thummim*: Which they make the meaning of the word *further*. And while they were going to make this Enquiry, he went and hid himself, till the Oracle discovered him. See *Buxtorf, Hist. Urim and Thummim. Cap. 3. p. 307*.

Ver. 23. *And they ran and fetcht him thence; and when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people, from his shoulders and upwards.]* A Princely Person, and of a Majestick Aspect. As *Corn. Nepos* describes *Iphicrates* in the Account he gives of his Life, *Cap. 3. Fuit & animo magno & corpore, imperatoriaque forma, ut ipso aspectu cuiusvis injiceret admirationem sui*. He was great both in Mind and Body; having a Form so imperial, that his very Aspect struck every one with Admiration of him. And thus *P. Cuneus* observes, that not only barbarous People, but the most polite Nations did, *Majestatem corporis venerari*, look upon a Majestick Body with Veneration, *Lib. 1. de Repub. Hebr. p. 85*. Which appears by what *Homer* saith of *Agamemnon, Iliad. 3. ver. 166*. and *Virgil* of *Aeneas* and *Turnus*: The latter of which he describes just like *Saul, Lib. 7. ver. 782*.

*Ipse inter primos præstanti corpore Turnus
Vertitur, arma tenens, & toto vertice supra est.*

Ver. 24. *And Samuel said unto all the people, See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen.]* Tho' the People were resolutely bent to have a King; yet they were sensible none could make one but God. And therefore they came, in the beginning of this Business, to ask one of his Prophets. But *Samuel* could not constitute one without divine Direction and Appointment; as appears by the first Verse of this Chapter, where he saith, *the LORD hath anointed thee*; and the Lot whereby he was publickly chosen, was cast before the LORD, *ver. 19, 23*. And accordingly here he tells them, *the LORD hath chosen him*. Thus afterwards the LORD commanded *David* to be anointed, *xvi. 1, 3*. and among all his Sons *Solomon* was particularly appointed by God to succeed him, *1 Chron. xxix. 5*.

That there is none like him among all the people.] Such was his Stature, and his Aspect, that, as *Josephus* expresses it, ἐξείχε τε ἀπάντων, καὶ τὸ ὕψος ἦν βασιλικώτατον, he excelled, and was most kingly in his height, *Lib. 6. Antiq. Cap. 5*.

And all the people shouted.] All that were then present; except some prophane Fellows, who were so far from owning him for their King, that they despised him.

And said, God save the King.] In the Hebrew, *let the King live*, that is, be prosperous. The same form of Words was used in After-ages, when they made Kings, *1 Kings i. 34, 39. 2 Kings xi. 12. 2 Chron. xxiii. 11*. All this being done at *Mizpeh*, when *Samuel* set up the great Stone called *Eben-Ezer*; it is not improbable that *Saul* was there declared their King.

Ver. 25: *Then Samuel told the People the manner of the Kingdom, and wrote it in a Book, and laid it up before the LORD.]* The Right of the King, which he had laid before the People, upon their first desire to have one (viii. 11.) he now wrote in a Book, and laid up before the LORD: That it might be a Witness against them, that all the Evils which hereafter befel them, were drawn upon them by their own Desires: For what *Petrus Guncus* saith, that he wrote the Words mentioned *Deut. xvii. 16, &c.* is altogether unlikely: They being laid up before the LORD long ago, when the Law was put by the side of the Ark, *Deut. xxxi. 26.* *Josephus* said a great deal better, *Lib. 6. Antiq. cap. 5.* *Τὸ μέλλοντα συμβῆσθαι καὶ γράψαι, &c.* *The Prophet having written the Evils that should befall them, he read them in the ears of the King, and then laid up the Book in the Tabernacle of God, to be a Testimony unto future Ages of what he had foretold.* A Duplicate of this Writing, it is likely, he left with the Elders of the People.

And Samuel sent all the People away, every Man to his House.] The People were not dismissed by *Saul*, who would not presently take upon him to exercise his Authority. For *Samuel* was there, who had been for many Years their supreme Governour: That is, sixteen Years (as *Sir J. Marsham* computes) before the Inauguration of *Saul*: And he lived eighteen Years after, as *Josephus* saith, in the latter end of the sixth Book of his *Antiquities*; during which time, he exercised the Power of a Judge.

Ver. 26. *Saul also went home to Gibeab.]* In this he still shewed his Humility: Going to his own home, which was no princely Palace.

And there went with him a Band of Men, whose heart God had touched.] A Company of stout valiant Men, of great Resolution: Whom God inclined to follow him, as his Guard. Or, were moved perhaps, by the Authority of *Samuel* (who was a Man of God) to go and attend him.

Ver. 27. *And the Children of Belial said.]* Some very lewd Men (see upon *Deuteron. xiii. 13.*) who hated all Government: And being, it is probable, Men of some Rank and Quality, were proud, and despised a Person of such a small Family.

How shall this Man save us?] They would not vouchsafe so much as to call him by his Name; but insolently contemned him, as one of no note, who had no Power to deliver them.

And they despised him, and brought him no Presents.] As the manner was to do unto their Kings in the Eastern Countries, when they first tender'd their Service to them. Which was a Token of their Benevolence, Subjection, and Joy. Thus the Psalmist represents the People offering Gifts to the *Messiah*, *Psal. xlv. and lxxii.*

Jonathan thus expresses it in this Place, *They did not come to wish him a happy Reign.*

But he held his peace.] This was an Act of great Prudence: which declared he was endued with an extraordinary Spirit; which enabled him to dissemble his Knowledge of the Scorn they put upon him. For if he had taken notice of it, he must have punish'd it; and it had

not been safe to begin his Reign, with any thing of Severity: Therefore he wisely ordered himself, as if he did not observe their Neglect. *Corn. Bertram* thinks, in his *Book de Repub. Jud. cap. 10.* that these Men refusing to be governed by *Saul*, he retired for a while, and led a private Life: leaving *Samuel* to administer all Affairs, as he had done for many Years. But whether that be true or no, it is evident *Saul*, in the beginning of his Reign, was endued with a Spirit of singular Wisdom and Moderation: And was none of those Princes whom *Dion Pruseus* describes (*Orat. de Regno, p. 5.*) *μακαρίζοντας ἐξουσίαν μὲν ἀνοίας, who bless and praise Power, joined with Folly and want of Understanding.*

C H A P. XI.

Verse 1. *Then Nabash the Ammonite.]* He was either the King of the Children of *Ammon*, or the Captain of his Host; who laid siege to *Jabesh-Gilead*, as *Josephus* saith, about a Month after *Saul* was chosen King: But had levied War against them before (xii. 12.) which was the occasion of their desiring a King.

Came up against Jabesh-Gilead.] He renewed, it is likely, their old Pretensions to this Country: which they had made in the time of *Jephthab*. For *Jabesh-Gilead* was in the Tribe of *Manasseh* on the other side *Jordan*; bordering upon the *Ammonites*: who laid a claim to this Country, which the *Israelites* took from *Sihon* and *Og*, as we read in *Judges xi.*

And all the Men of Jabesh said unto Nabash, make a Covenant with us, and we will serve thee.] Be his Subjects, but not Slaves, with whom no Covenant was made.

Ver. 2. *And Nabash the Ammonite answered them, On this condition I will make a Covenant with you, that I may thrust out all your right Eyes.]* He would not put out both their Eyes, because that would have made them unserviceable to him: But only the right, which (as many learned Men have observed) was most useful in War; the left Eye being covered with their Shields, which they held in their left hand: So *Procopius Gazæus*, the left Eye is covered with the Shield; with the right we see our Enemies.

And lay it for a Reprach upon all Israel.] This is the only Reason he gives for such insolent Treatment, that all *Israel* might know what they were to expect, if he could prevail over them.

Ver. 3. *And the Elders of Jabesh said unto him, Give us seven days, that we may send Messengers into all the Coasts of Israel, and then if there be no Man to save us, we will come out to thee.]* It may seem strange, that either they should submit so soon to such base Conditions; or that *Nabash* should grant them so much respite, when he saw them so abject and inclined to yield to him. But the Reason of both is visible: For *Saul* they thought was not able to help them; having not yet taken upon him the Government, but living privately (see *ver. 5.*) and *Nabash* it is like was loth to drive them to Desperation, by denying them this short space to

expect Relief; which he thought could not possibly come to them; tho' Saul should appear and endeavour to levy an Army; for that he imagined could not be done, in so few days.

Ver. 4. *Then came Messengers to Gibeah of Saul.*] So called, because Saul was there born, and bred, and dwelt.

And told the Tidings in the ears of the People, and all the People lift up their Voices and wept.] As Men despairing of Relief.

Ver. 5. *And behold, Saul came after the Herd out of the Field; and Saul said, What aileth the People, that they weep? And they told him the Tidings of the Men of Jabesh.*] By this it appears (as I noted in the Conclusion of the foregoing Chapter) that some Men, not only refusing to submit to him, but despising him; he went and lived retired, and led a rustick Life: exercising no Authority over the People; but leaving all to Samuel's Management.

Ver. 6. *Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, when he heard these Tidings, and his Anger was kindled greatly.*] But now he resolved, by an impulse he felt from Heaven, to show that God had chosen him to be their King: Who, upon this occasion gave him an extraordinary measure of Courage, Zeal, and Military Skill.

Ver. 7. *And he took a Yoke of Oxen.*] Which he had newly brought out of the Field, ver. 5.

And hewed them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the Coasts of Israel, by the hand of Messengers, saying, Whosoever comes not forth after Saul, and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his Oxen.]

He herein begins to give a proof of his Resolution, by this terrible Threatning; and by the Representation he made of the Execution he intended, if he was disobeyed. Whereby it appears that the Kings of Israel assumed such an absolute Power as Samuel described, chap. viii. One part of which consisted in making War, and raising Soldiers by their sole Authority, and punishing those that did not come to the Army at their Summons. For we never read that they consulted the Oracle before they went to War; nor that they are reproved by the Prophets for that neglect. In like manner they made Laws, which is the Act of a Sovereign. For tho' they could not alter the Laws of Moses, but were to govern themselves by them; yet in things not determined there, or were not clear and plain, they made what Laws they thought good; as appears by David and Solomon, and other of their best Princes.

And the Fear of the LORD fell upon the People.] They were no less affected with the cutting these Oxen in pieces, than they had been with the using the Levite's Concubine in like manner (Judg. xix. 19.) as Bochartus notes: who observes something like this among heathen People, Hierozoic. P. i. lib. 2. cap. 33.

And they came out with one consent.] God who put Courage into Saul, possessed the People also with a Fear of offending him; now that he asserted his Royal Authority over them. For he names himself before Samuel (the Kingly Dignity being superior to the Prophetical) but wisely mentions him also, that they who did not reverence himself as their King, might follow the Prophet, whom all revered.

Ver. 8. *And when they numbred them in Bezek.*] Of this place, see upon Judges i. 6.

The Children of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the Men of Judah thirty thousand.] It is thought by some, that the Philistines invaded them in the West, as the Ammonites did in the East, (just as they had done formerly in the time of Jephtha, Judg. x. 7, 8.) which is the reason so few of Judah came in at this Summons; being engaged elsewhere against another dangerous Enemy. But they would not wholly neglect to come to his Assistance in this other War, but showed their forwardness to obey him, as much as they were able. Bertram also, *Altingius* (in his *Skilo*, L. 3. Cap. 11.) and others, take it as an Honour done to this Tribe, which had the Preheminence, that they were numbered by themselves. But Sir J. Marsham looks upon it as the beginning of a Schism, *Secul. ix.*

Ver. 9. *And they said unto the Messengers that came, Thus shall ye say to the Men of Jabesh-Gilead, to-morrow by that time the Sun shall be hot, ye shall have help, &c.*] The morrow after their return, before noon.

Ver. 10. *Therefore the Men of Jabesh said.*] Unto Nabash the Ammonite.

To-morrow we will come out unto you, and ye shall do with us that which seemeth good to you.] In case, that is, Relief did not come to them by that time: Of which they pretended to have no Hope. Most look upon this as spoken ironically and in mockery: But Grotius takes it for a Stratagem, to make them secure; according to the Opinion of those times, that they might delude the Enemy by deceitful Words: As *Elisba* did the Syrians, 2 Kings vi. 18, 19, &c. See lib. 3. de Jure Belli & Pacis, cap. 1. sect. 17.

Ver. 11. *And it was so on the morrow, that Saul put the People in three Companies, and they came into the midst of the Host in the Morning-watch; and slew the Ammonites 'till the Heat of the Day.*] He set upon them, I suppose, on three Sides, and the Men of Jabesh issuing out on the other, they were so distracted that they could make little Resistance: But the Israelites got into the midst of them very early, and made a great Slaughter of them 'till Noon.

And it came to pass that they which remained were scattered, so that two of them were not left together.] This is added to show, with what a compleat Victory Saul began his Reign: Whereby God established his Authority.

Ver. 12. *And the People said unto Samuel.*] Who, it appears from hence, accompanied Saul in this Expedition, to encourage him with hopes of good Success.

Who is he that said, Saul shall not reign over us? bring the Men that we may put them to death.] Great Successes make great Alterations in the Affections of the People; who quietly saw Saul contemned a little while ago: But now would have Enquiry made after those Sons of Belial, who spake opprobriously of him, x. 27.

Ver. 13. *And Saul said, There shall not a Man be put to death this day.*] He prudently dissimbled his Knowledge of their Despisal of him, before the Kingdom was confirmed to him: But this Moderation, now that he was wonderfully

derfully victorious, argued greater Wisdom and Goodness. For nothing is more glorious than to be humble and meek in the height of Power.

For to-day the LORD hath wrought Salvation in Israel.] Besides the Policy he exercised in pardoning Offenders (whereby he laid the strongest Obligations upon them to be faithful to him) it was a piece of Piety, to imitate God; who had been so good to them all.

Ver. 14. *Then Samuel said unto the People, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, to renew the Kingdom there.]* New Kingdoms are not easily settled. And this Place was famous upon many accounts, as *Mispeh* was, where *Samuel* first declared him King. Particularly; *Samuel* was wont to judge the People here, vii. 16.

Ver. 15. *And all the People went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul King, before the LORD in Gilgal.]* He had been anointed in *Ramah*, and chosen by Lot in *Mizpeh*; but still some disdained to own him as their King: Which made him content himself for a time, (as I said before) with a private Life. But now, after this signal Token of God's Presence with him, in the late Victory, he was by common Consent acknowledged by all the People for their King. Which is the Meaning of these Words, *they made Saul King*; for it is certain, it was neither *they* nor *Samuel* that could make a King; but God alone: Who ordered *Samuel* to anoint him, and then made the Lot to fall upon him; and now inclined the Hearts of all the People to submit to his Authority.

The LXX here say, ἔχρισε Σαυλ, &c. that *Samuel* here anointed *Saul* King over *Israel*. And *Josephus* (Lib. vi. C. 6.) that he again anointed *Saul*, τῷ ἁγίῳ ἐλαίῳ, with holy Oil. But there is not a word of this anointing in the Hebrew Text, no, nor in the Vulgar Latin: And the Targum very well expresses it, *they made Saul to reign*; i. e. would not let him any longer lead a private Life; but prayed him to take the Government upon him according to God's Ordinance, and promised Subjection to him. *Gilgal* seems to have been chosen for this purpose, rather than any other place: Because there was a sanctified piece of Ground, as *Abarbinel* speaks, where, when they entered into *Canaan*, the Ark first stood: Which now perhaps they brought hither, and offered Sacrifice before it.

And there they sacrificed Sacrifices of Peace-offerings before the LORD.] Who was present, as I observed before (see *Judges* xx. 1.) in such great Assemblies of the Body of the People: With whom both they and their King made a Covenant of Obedience to him, by offering of the Sacrifices.

And there Saul and all the Men of Israel rejoiced together.] By feasting upon the Peace-offerings: Giving thanks to God for the late Victory, and for settling the Kingdom.

C H A P. XII.

Verse 1. **A**ND *Samuel* said unto all *Israel*.] In the presence of *Saul*, as appears from ver. 3, 5.

Behold, I have hearkened unto you in all that you said unto me, and have made you a King:] This Speech was made before they parted from *Gilgal*; where they had renewed the Kingdom.

Ver. 2. *And now behold the King walketh before you.]* To rule and govern them; *Numb.* xxvii. 17.

And I am old and grey-headed.] And therefore very willing to be discharged from the Government of you.

And behold, my Sons are with you.] Reduced also to the State of private Persons; being the King's Subjects; no less than you.

And I have walked before you, from my Childhood to this day.] He appeals to them whether he had not always discharged his Duty faithfully, from the very beginning; when God had made him a Prophet to instruct and guide them. For now they might freely accuse him, if they had any thing to alledge against him: Both he and his Sons being now become Subjects to a more Sovereign Authority.

Ver. 3. *Behold, here I am, witness against me before the LORD, and before his Anointed.]* He offers himself to be tried, and to give a publick Account of his Administration: Being ready to answer any thing that could be objected against him.

Whose Ox have I taken, or whose Ass have I taken?] He desires them to testify, if he had ruled after the manner of the Eastern Kings: Under which Government they chose to put themselves.

Or whom have I defrauded, whom have I oppressed.] If they knew of no open Violence, he bids them mention any Fraud or Circumvention, of which he had been guilty.

Or of whose hands have I received any Bribes, to blind mine Eyes? and I will restore it you.] He challenges them to prove so much as the receiving any Gift, in any Cause that came before him; and he would make full Satisfaction.

Ver. 4. *And they said, Thou hast not defrauded, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any Man's hand.]* They acknowledge him to be perfectly an upright Judge: Who could not be charged to have done any thing amiss.

Ver. 5. *And he said unto them, the LORD is Witness against you, and his Anointed is Witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand. And they answered, He is Witness.]* Of his Innocence; and that they had no reason to complain of his Government.

Ver. 6. *And Samuel said unto the People, It is the LORD that advanced Moses and Aaron, and brought your Fathers up out of the Land of Egypt.]* *D. Kimchi* refers this to the foregoing Words; as if he had said, *the LORD that did such Wonders by Moses and Aaron is Witness, &c.*

Ver. 7. *Now therefore stand still.]* The Jews observe, that they were wont to stand, when they heard the Word of God. Tho' those Words *Exod.* xx. 18. are but a slender Proof of it.

That I may reason with you before the LORD, of all the righteous Acts of the LORD; which he did to you, and to your Fathers.] He would not dismiss them, till, having obtained this honourable

able Testimony from them, he had represented to them the great Benefits they had received from God, and their Ingratitude to him.

Ver. 8. *When Jacob was come into Egypt, and your Fathers cried unto the LORD, then the LORD sent Moses and Aaron; which brought your Fathers out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place.]* Any one may easily discern, this is but a compendious Narrative of what God did for them, from their first coming out of Egypt, till they were settled in Canaan: Which, in likelihood, Samuel more largely recited, when he reasoned with them. Therefore Moses and Aaron cannot be understood to have made them dwell in Canaan; no more than that *their Fathers cried unto the LORD, when Jacob came into Egypt*, and the LORD sent these two Persons to deliver them. For many things intervened between both these: Till at last God settled them in their Rest, in the good Land he promised to give them.

Ver. 9. *And when they forgot the LORD their God, he sold them into the hand of Sisera, Captain of the Host of Habor, and into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the King of Moab, and they fought against them.]* This is a short History of the Calamities which befel them, for their Idolatry, after they came there: Some few of which he only mentions; without observing exactly the Order in which they came upon them: But these were the People who longest oppressed them.

Ver. 10. *And they cried unto the LORD and said, We have sinned, because we have forsaken the LORD, and have served Baalim and Ashtaroth: but now deliver us out of the hand of our Enemies, and we will serve thee.]* This they did very often, Judges iii. 9, 13. iv. 3. vi. 7. especially x. 10, 15, &c.

Ver. 11. *And the Lord sent Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your Enemies on every side, and ye dwelt safely.]* This is perfectly agreeable to the History of the Book of Judges; which acquaints us, that as often as they repented, and besought his pardon, &c. he raised up Deliverers unto them: The latest of which he only mentions. In which account there is no Difficulty, but only about Bedan: Of whom we nowhere read. But see my Notes upon Judges x. iv. unto which may be added, that the Chaldee Paraphrase here hath it, *he sent Gideon and Sampson, &c.* whom most take to be the Person here meant, and called Ben-Dan (the Son of Dan) because he was of that Tribe: And by Contraction called Bedan; just as instead of Saul-meel (ask'd of God) they called him who writes this Book Samuel, for shortness sake. Who mentions himself as one of their Deliverers; because the signal Overthrow he gave the Philistines, which drove them out of their Country, was fresh in their Memory.

Ver. 12. *And when ye saw that Nabash the King of the Children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, nay, but a King shall reign over us: when the Lord your God was your King.]* They would not stay till God raised them up a Deliverer, or commanded Samuel, who was their Judge, to fight with him: But would have a King like

other Nations, always at hand to fight their Battles. See upon viii. 5. The words *Nay*, seems to signify that Samuel told them, that God would be with them to deliver them; or that he offered himself to be their Leader under God: But they refused his Offer, and continued to demand a King.

Ver. 13. *Now therefore, behold, the King whom you have chosen, and whom you have desired.]* He could not upbraid them too often with this, that they would not be content with the Government of God, which was peculiar to them; but chose to be like other People.

And behold, the LORD hath set a King over you.] Tho' they chose to have a King like other Nations, and be governed by God no longer: Yet he still puts them in mind they could not make one, but he was set over them by God; as I have before observed.

Ver. 14. *If ye will fear the LORD and serve him, and obey his Voice, and not rebel against the Commandment of the LORD.]* According to the Covenant they lately made with him, xi. 15. All Virtue springs from the Fear of God.

Then shall both ye and your King that reigneth over you, continue following the LORD your God.] That is, be defended by him; and continue a happy People: Notwithstanding they had thus rejected him. This appears to be the meaning, by what is opposed to it in the following Verse.

Ver. 15. *But if ye will not obey the Voice of the LORD, but rebel against the Commandment of the LORD; then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as it was against your Fathers.]* He would suffer their Enemies to oppress them, as they did in the Days of the Judges; or send other Plagues upon them.

Ver. 16. *Now therefore stand and see the great thing, which the LORD will do before your eyes.]* For a visible Demonstration of the Truth of all that Samuel had said.

Ver. 17. *Is it not Wheat-harvest to-day?] A very clear Day, and in no disposition to rain. Which was not wont to fall in Harvest-time; but in the Autumn, and in the Spring: Called the later and the former Rain.*

I will call upon the LORD, and he shall send Thunder and Rain, that you may perceive and see, that your Wickedness is great, which you have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a King.] By this he shewed how he could in an Instant deprive them of all the Comforts of Life; as they deserved, for their rejecting him and his Prophet: Who was so powerful, as by his Prayers to produce such Wonders.

Ver. 18. *So Samuel called upon the LORD, and the LORD sent Thunder and Rain that day.]* A very horrible Tempest, accompanied it is likely with Lightning; when all was serene, and no Sign appeared of it.

And all the People feared the LORD and Samuel.] This struck such a Terror into them, that they were afraid God would destroy them, as he did Korah, Dathan, and Abiram: And that Samuel would not intercede for them.

Ver. 19. *And all the People said unto Samuel, Pray for thy Servants unto the LORD, that we die not: for we have added unto all our Sins this Evil, to ask us a King.]* Till now they seem not to

to have been sensible of their Sin, in desiring an Alteration in the Form of their Government: Therefore it was a miraculous Storm, full of Horror, which extorted this Confession from them; not only of this, but all their former Sins.

Ver. 20. *And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not; ye have done all this wickedness; yet turn not aside from following the LORD, but serve him with all your heart.*] He would not have them despair of recovering God's Favour; and directs them the best way to it: By continuing so sensible of their Wickedness, as to be moved to true Repentance, and stedfast Obedience.

Ver. 21. *And turn ye not aside, for then shall ye go after vain things which cannot profit.*] He warns them above all things against worshipping other Gods, whom he calls *vain things which cannot profit*; by a Scheme of Speech in the Hebrew Language, signifying, *they do a great deal of mischief*. Thus in *Prov. xx. 23.* the Wise Man saith, *a false balance is not good; that is, is very bad and hateful to God; as it goes before, of divers weights.* And thus Heathen Writers speak, particularly *Homer, Odyss. xi. ver. 85*

Ὁυ γὰρ σκέτλια ἔργα θεοὶ μάκαρες φιλέουσι.

The Blessed Gods do not love wicked Actions, *i. e.* they hate and detest them.

Nor deliver, for they are vain.] He presses them to persist in the Worship of God alone: whom if they forsook, and went after other Gods, in vain did they expect Help and Deliverance from them, for they were void of all Power.

Ver. 22. *For the LORD will not forsake his People, for his great name sake; because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his People.*] The Stedfastness of God in his Affection to them, notwithstanding their Provocations, was a mighty Motive to faithful Obedience.

Ver. 23. *Moreover, as for me; God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will instruct you in the good and right way.*] Not only pray for them, but teach and instruct them: Which were the two great Offices of a Prophet. They had highly disoblged him; but he imitated God, who pardoned them, and so did he.

Ver. 24. *Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you.*] All his Prayers and Instructions would not do the Business; without their serious Considerations. And what more worthy their constant Thoughts than the great Benefits they had received from God: Particularly his tender Mercy, in not casting them off, when they shook off his Government.

Ver. 25. *But if you will still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both you and your King.*] As it proved, not only in this, but in several future Reigns.

C H A P. XIII.

Verse 1. **A**ND Saul reigned one year.] In the Hebrew the Words are, *the Son of one year in his Reign or Kingdom.* A very lear-

ned Prelate of our own (in his *Demonstration of the Messiah*, Part 2. p. 240.) takes the meaning to be, that *after the Philistines were subdued by Samuel, a year passed, when Saul began to reign: and after this, he reigned two years free from their yoke.* As for his being called *the Son of one year* in the Hebrew, it is well translated by us *reigned one year*; because he was born, when he was made King, and changed into another Man: For thus (as *Bochartus* hath observed) the Day of an Emperor's Inauguration, among the Gentiles, was called his *Birth-day*, viz. *Natalis Regni*, the Day when he began his Reign.

And when he had reigned two years over Israel.] So *Rabbi* interprets the Hebrew Words; and thereby confutes the strange fancy in *Seder Olam Rabba*, that *Saul* reigned but two Years in all. Whereas the meaning is, after this he reigned two years free from the Oppression of the *Philistines*: But when they were ended, the *Philistines* got the upper hand again, and enslaved the *Israelites*, as appears by this Chapter.

Ver. 2. *Saul chose him three thousand men.*] In the first year of his Reign he performed those things mentioned in the foregoing Chapter: And when he had reigned two Years, these things fell out which we read in this Chapter. Which is much better than *Dr. Lightfoot's* Exposition, that he had been King one Year from his first anointing at *Ramah*, to his second at *Gibeah*: and after that he reigned two Years more before the LORD cast him off, and anointed *David*. *Symmachus* and *Procopius Gazæus*, not much otherwise. Who by *Son of one year* think the Simplicity of his Mind is denoted: which he preserved for some time, *i. e.* till he had reigned two Years over *Israel*, and then he began to be depraved and forsaken of God.

Whereof two thousand were with Saul in Michmash, and in Mount Benjamin, and one thousand men with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin.] There was another *Gibeah* in the Tribe of *Judah*, *Josh. xv. 57.*

And the rest of the People he sent every man to his Tent.] The forementioned number being sufficient for his Guard, and to preserve the Country in Peace, and to oppose any sudden inroad of their Enemies: He would not be burdensome to his People, by keeping great Forces.

Ver. 3. *And Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines.*] Who tho' subdued by *Samuel* at *Aben-Ezer*, and driven out of the Country; yet kept some strong-holds, as I observed, x. 5.

That was in Geba.] This was a distinct place from *Gibeah*, tho' both in the Tribe of *Benjamin*: As is evident from *Josh. xviii. 24, 28.*

And the Philistines heard it.] And thereupon (as the following Words import) denounced War against *Israel*.

And Saul blew the Trumpet throughout all the Land of Israel, saying, Let the Hebrews hear.] He gave them notice, by a Proclamation, what *Jonathan* had done, and what was the effect of it: And thereupon summoned them to come to *Gilgal*.

Ver. 4. *And all Israel heard say, that Saul had smitten the garrison of the Philistines.*] This shows

shews that *Jonathan* acted by *Saul's* order : who was desirous to free his own Tribe from such Intruders.

And that Israel also was an Abomination with the Philistines.] Who were highly incensed to take Revenge.

And the People were called together after Saul to Gilgal.] Where *Samuel* had appointed to meet him, x. 8.

Ver. 5. *The Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand Chariots, and six thousand Horsemen, and People as the Sand of the Sea-shore for multitude: And they came up and pitched in Michmash, eastward from Beth-aven.]* A prodigious Army, and very formidable, by reason of their Chariots and Horsemen, which were also very numerous (see *Josh. xi. 4.*) But it is not likely the *Philistines* alone could bring so many into the Field ; No, nor after other Nations thereabout were associated with them, it is credible that they should make up Thirty thousand Chariots of War. For none ever had so many ; *Pharaoh* himself pursuing the *Israelites* only with Six hundred, *Exodus xiv. 7.* Therefore most of them were no more than Carriages, which were necessary for the Baggage of such vast Multitudes of People : Which is a better Account, in my Judgment, than to say there is a Mistake made by Transcribers in later Times : As *Bochartus* himself thinks, (*Hierozyicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 9.) because in the *Syriack* and *Arabick* Copies there are only found three thousand. Which is too great a number, without the help of the foregoing Exposition ; for in the vast Army of *Mithridates* there were but an hundred Chariots, and in *Darius's* two hundred, and in *Antiochus Epiphanes's* (of which we read *2 Macc. xiii. 2.*) but three hundred.

Ver. 6. *When the Men of Israel saw that they were in a strait (for the People were distressed) 'Tho' their wonderful Success against the Ammonites had encouraged them to obey the Summons of such a prosperous Leader, as Saul had been ; yet when they saw the vast Army of the Philistines, how well they were appointed, and themselves unprovided, their hearts failed them, and they flunk from him as fast as they had flocked to him.*

Then the People did hide themselves, in Caves, and in Thickets, and in Rocks, and in High-places, and in Pits.] One part of the People endeavoured to secure themselves in Lurking-places : Where it was not easy to find them.

Ver. 7. *And some of the Hebrews went over Jordan to the Land of Gad and Gilead.]* Another part of them fled as far as they could from present Danger ; into the Country of the two Tribes and a half.

As for Saul he was yet in Gilgal, and all the People followed him trembling.] All that were left with him, were in great fear, seeing so many of their Brethren desert him.

Ver. 8. *And he tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel appointed.]* He mistook *Samuel's* meaning (as I showed upon x. 8.) who told him he would come and offer Sacrifice, seven Days : And then adds, *thou shalt tarry 'till I come.* So two Interpreters, who are ancient in respect of our times (*Rupertus,*

and *Angelomus*) have observed an *Amphibologia* in *Samuel's* Words in that Place, which may be construed two ways ; and it was *Saul's* Folly to make choice of the wrong Sense. For the last words there are as much as if he had said, *be sure to tarry 'till I come, and show thee what thou shalt do.* And indeed common Reason might have taught him, that if the War was to be undertaken, it was to be managed likewise by the Counsel of the LORD : And therefore he ought not to have sacrificed, or done any other solemn Act, before the Prophet, who was God's Ambassador in this Business, came to instruct him.

But Samuel came not to Gilgal.] So soon as *Saul* expected him.

And the People were scattered from him.] That third part of the People who were left, began to go away ; when they saw *Samuel* did not come to advise and assist him, in this dangerous Condition.

Ver. 9. *And Saul said, bring hither the Burnt-offering unto me, and Peace-offerings : and he offered the Burnt-offering.]* And would have proceeded to offer the Peace-offerings, if *Samuel's* coming had not prevented him.

Ver. 10. *And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the Burnt-offering, behold, Samuel came : and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him.]* Welcome him thither : Which he did in honour of the Prophet.

Ver. 11. *And Samuel said, What hast thou done ? and Saul said, Because I saw the People were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together to Michmash.]* These look'd like weighty Reasons ; but could not excuse his Presumption in not waiting for *Samuel*, who assured him he would come thither.

Ver. 12. *Therefore said I, the Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD ; I forced my self therefore, and offered a Burnt-offering.]* He pretends it was much against his Inclination : But pleads necessity for what he did ; lest his Enemies should have set upon him, before he had commended himself to God, and begg'd his Blessing. By which it appears, that Burnt-offerings were of the nature of a Prayer to God : Whom they acknowledged thereby to be the LORD of all. Whence it is that we read so often of *Abraham* and *Isaac*, that they built Altars (which were for Sacrifice) and called upon the Name of the LORD. The Gentiles also, as well as the Jews, invoked God by their Sacrifices, as *Mr. Mede* hath shown from *Homer*, and other Authors, Book 2. p. 464.

Ver. 13. *And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly ; thou hast not kept the Commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee.]* When God advanced *Saul* to be King, he was little in his own Eyes, and then a great Man in the sight of God. But now he began to take upon him, and thought it was fit the Prophet should wait for the King, rather than the King for the Prophet : And distrusted *Samuel's* Word, who bad him tarry, till he came. And so intruded upon the Priest's Office ; or at least caused the Priest to do that unseasonably ; which was reserved for *Samuel* to do,

do, when God thought fit to send him: Who had all along transacted all Matters between God and *Saul*. In short, his Folly and Disobedience consisted in this, that he intrenched upon the Priest's Office, or upon the Prophet's, or upon both: And would not wait *Samuel's* coming, nor confess his Fault to him when he came; but made Excuses, and laid the fault upon all but himself, *ver. 11.*

Abarbinel hath expounded this a little more distinctly, by observing the Command which *Samuel* gave him when he first anointed him, *x. 8.* where he tells him *first*, he would come and offer Sacrifice; *2dly*, he bids him wait for him seven Days: And *lastly*, saith he would direct him what to do. Now *Saul* transgressed every part of this Command: For he offered Sacrifice himself, which God intended should be offered only by the Prophet; and he did not stay till the end of the seventh Day, but offered on the seventh Day in the Morning; and he intended to begin the War, without any Direction from *Samuel*, what he should do. He thinks also, that those Words *seven Days* (in that place) may refer to the Words going before, *viz. Peace-offerings* so many Days. For *Saul* was bound, as it follows, to tarry till *Samuel* came, tho' he stayed more than seven Days before he came.

For now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever.] This suggests that the Intention of *Samuel's* coming to offer Sacrifice at *Gilgal* for seven Days, was to confirm *Saul* in the Kingdom (as I observed upon *x. 8.*) if he had not foolishly deprived himself of that Blessing: But here the Hebrew Doctors take notice of a Difficulty, which is, how God could intend to establish the Kingdom upon him for ever, without contradicting the Prophecy of *Jacob*, who had promised the Scepter to the Tribe of *Judah*. Which *Rablag* thinks is sufficiently answered, by saying that *for ever* signifies no more than a long time; as it doth in the Words of *Hannah* in the beginning of this Book, Chap. i. 22. and in *Exod. xxi. 9.* and many more Places. And so others interpret these Words, *as long as his Posterity lasted.*

Ver. 14. But now the Kingdom shall not continue.] He predicts that God would not let his Family enjoy the Kingdom: Because of other Sins which he foresaw he would commit.

The LORD hath sought him a Man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be Captain over his People: because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.] God had not yet commanded *David* to lead his People: But he fully intended to do it, if *Saul* did not repent and obtain a Pardon of him for his Offence. Whereby he had not provoked him so far, as to have an irreverfible Sentence passed upon him (as many great Men have thought) but it might have been revoked, if he had not persisted in his Folly, and committed a much greater Offence against the Divine Majesty, in the War against *Amalek*. Then *Samuel* tells him, the LORD would not repent: Which not being added here, makes it probable he was capable of a Pardon, notwithstanding this Denunciation; if he had begged it with Repentance, and better Obedience for the time to come.

VOL. II.

Ver. 15. And *Samuel* arose, and gat him up from *Gilgal* unto *Gibeath of Benjamin*.] The Place of *Saul's* Birth, and where he lived. Which I look upon as a Sign that *Samuel* did not intend to desert him, as he did afterward, nor looked upon him yet as forsaken by God.

And *Saul* numbred the People that were present with him, about six hundred Men.] A strange Alteration since the last Year, when against the *Ammonites* he had three hundred thousand Men with him besides those of *Judah*, *xi. 6.*

Ver. 16. And *Saul* and *Jonathan* his Son, and the People who were present with him, abode in *Gibeath of Benjamin*.] They followed *Samuel*; and it was a strong Place, where they could defend themselves better than in the open Field: And here, it is likely, he hoped to increase his Forces, being in his own Tribe.

But the Philistines incamped in *Michmash*.] A Place not very remote from *Gibeath*; but in the Tribe of *Ephraim*.

Ver. 17. And the Spoilers came out of the Camp of the Philistines, in three Companies.] They sent out Parties three several ways, to ravage the Country, there being none to oppose them.

One Company turned the way that leadeth to *Opbrab*.] There was a City of this Name in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, *Josh. xviii. 23.* but many take this rather to be that in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, where *Gideon* was born, *Judges vi. 11.*

Unto the Land of *Shuall*.] So called, because it abounded with Foxes; as *Bochart* observes.

Ver. 18. And another Company turned the way of *Beth-boron*.] Both the upper, and the nether Cities of this Name, were in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, *1 Chron. vii. 24.*

And another Company turned to the way of the Border, that looks to the Valley of *Zeboim*, towards the Wilderness.] The *Chaldee* Paraphrast translates these Words, the Valley of Vipers: For *Tzeboa* signifies a sort of speckled Serpent, wherewith this Valley abounded; and lay towards the Wilderness of *Jericho* in the Tribe of *Benjamin*. Thus also a great Number of the Hebrew Writers translate *Zeboim*: Which *Junius* takes for a City in this Tribe. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozycon*, p. 2. lib. 3. cap. 7.

Ver. 19. Now there was no Smith found thro'out all the Land of Israel: for the Philistines said, lest the Hebrews make them Swords and Spears.] To this miserable Condition the Philistines had reduced them during the Forty Years Tyranny over them, of which we read *Judges xiii. 1.* But after *Samuel* had put an end to it, by the great Overthrow he gave the Philistines at *Eben-Ezer*, it seems something strange they had not restored their Artificers. But the Sloth of the Israelites appears in their whole Story: And it was not easy, in so short a time, for Men to learn this Trade. Which the Philistines wisely destroyed, as the Chaldeans, when they destroyed *Jerusalem*, carried away all the Smiths to *Babylon*; that they who remained in the Land, might not arm themselves again, *2 Kings xxiv. 14.*

Ver. 20. But all the Men of Israel went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every Man his Share, and his Coulter, and his Ax, and his Mattock.] Not to the Country of the Philistines, for that was too far off from some parts of the Land of

H h

Israel;

Israel; but to their Garrisons, which they held among them, even after *Samuel* had driven the main Body of them out of the Country, as I observed upon x. 5.

Ver. 21. *Yet they had a File for the Mattocks, and for the Coulters, and for the Forks, and for the Axes, and to sharpen the Goats.*] Thus *Pliny* tells us in his *Natural History*, Lib. 31. Cap. 14. that in the League which *Porfenna* made with the Roman People, after the Expulsion of their Kings, it was expressly covenanted, *Ne ferro, nisi in agricultura, uterentur*; that they should not make use of Iron, but only in the tilling of their Fields.

Ver. 22. *So it came to pass that in the Day of Battle, there was neither Sword nor Spear found in the Hand of any of the People that were with Saul and Jonathan: but with Saul and Jonathan his Son was there found.*] The Jews being very much addicted to feeding Cattle, very much neglected mechanical Arts: As appeared when *Solomon* built the Temple. For there were so few skilled in Architecture, among the *Israelites*, that he was constrained to send to another Nation for them. And so *Rasi* thinks it was in the Trade of Smiths; there being no Iron Mines in the Land. But that was not the true Reason, as *Kimchi* observes; for the *Philistines*, as was said before, had transplanted the Smiths, when the *Israelites* were under their Dominion. In other Oppressions also, which they lay under, their Enemies were wont to disarm them; as appears by the Song of *Deborah*, Judges v. 8. But tho' they had no Sword nor Spear, yet they had Bows and Arrows, and Slings: Which the Men of *Gibeah* could anciently manage to a wonderful advantage, as we read Judges xx. 16. And besides these, they antiently used Clubs to beat down their Enemies; and before the Invention of Spears with Iron Points, they had sharp Stakes hardened in the Fire, as many Authors inform us.

Ver. 23. *And the Garrison of the Philistines went out to the passage of Michmash.*] Some refer this to the Garrison mentioned ver. 3. which *Jonathan* having smitten, they that escaped joined with the Army at *Michmash*. But it refers rather to the Garrison mentioned in the beginning of the next Chapter, ver. 1. and the last Word relates not to the Passage, but to the Garrison. As if he had said, *The Garrison of the Philistines in Michmash went out to the Passage.* For *Michmash*, as *Rasi* observes, was upon a high Hill, as *Gibeah* was: between which was a Valley, called here a Passage. Into which the Garrison descended, to invite the *Israelites* to Battle: Or as the *Targum* translates the first Word, the Captain General of the *Philistines* went out into the Valley; to view the Ground, we may suppose, and form a Camp there.

C H A P. XIV.

Verse 1. **N**OW it came to pass upon a day, that *Jonathan* the Son of *Saul* said unto the young Man that bare his Armour; Come, and let us go over to the Garrison of the *Philistines* that is on the other side.] Of the Valley, mentioned in the foregoing Verse. This had been

a very rash Attempt, and very criminal (he having no order from his Father, who commanded in chief) if he had not had a Divine Incitation to it. Which he felt upon the sight of the *Philistines* appearing, as if they intended to assault *Gibeah*: And upon the Information he received of the great Spoil, which the three Parties made of the poor People in the Country, xiii. 17.

But he told not his Father.] Lest he should have hindred him from this Enterprize, into which he felt himself moved by God.

Ver. 2. *And Saul tarried in the uttermost part of Gibeah.*] In some Intrenchments he had made without the City.

Under a Pomegranate Tree, which is in Migron.] Where he pitched his Tent.

And the People that were with him, were about six hundred Men.] His Forces were not augmented since he came to *Gibeah*, as might have been expected (xiii. 15, 16.) But as *Vegetius* observes, (Lib. 1. de Re militari, Cap. 8.) *in omni conflictu non tam prodest multitudo, quam virtus. In all conflicts Valour doth more service than Multitude.*

Ver. 3. *And Abijah the Son of Abitub, Icabod's Brother, the Son of Phineas.*] It seems *Phineas* (who was slain with *Hophni*) left two Sons; *Icabod*, who was born after his Death; and *Abitub*, who was born before: And left a Son, who is here called *Abijah*, and in the xxii. 9. *Abimelech*; who left a Son called *Abiathar*, xxiii. 6.

The Son of Eli, the LORD's Priest in Shilo.] These last Words, *the LORD's Priest in Shilo*, manifestly belong to *Eli*, who was the High Priest while the Tabernacle was in *Shilo*.

Wearing an Ephod.] Or rather, the *Ephod*: Which comprehends the Breast-plate, with *Urim* and *Thummim*, for they were inseparable from it. These *Abijah*, being High Priest, now wore: For these Words, as *Rabag* observes, belong to him. See *Selden*, Lib. 1. de Success. ad Pontif. Cap. 3. *Saul* being now in great distress, sent for *Abijah*, to consult God for him, as there should be occasion: And as appears by the 18th Verse of this Chapter, had commanded him to bring the Ark with him from *Kirjath-jearim*.

And the People knew not that Jonathan was gone.] This makes *Josephus's* Opinion probable, that he went away in the Night: Which was prudent upon another account; that he might not be spied presently by the *Philistines*.

Ver. 4. *And between the passage by which Jonathan sought to go over unto the Philistines Garrison, there was a sharp Rock on one side, and a sharp Rock on the other.*] So that there was no way to come at the *Philistines*, but by climbing up one of these Rocks (ver. 12.) which were thought inaccessible: And therefore not fortified, as the other Passages to *Michmash* were, with such strong Guards, as *Jonathan* could not encounter.

The Name of the one was Bozoz, the Name of the other Saneh.] Which were such famous Precipices, that they had Names bestowed on them: The Original of which will not be worth our Enquiry; but the latter seems to have taken its Name, from the Thorns that grew upon it.

Ver. 5. *The Fore-front of the one was situate northward over against Michmash: and the other south-*

southward over-against Gibeah.] By this we understand how these two Places lay : Towards which these Rocks pointed.

Ver. 6. *And Jonathan said to the young Man, that bare his Armour, Come let us go over to the Garrison of the uncircumcised.]* He speaks of them with Contempt, as Strangers to the Covenant of God.

It may be the LORD will work for us ; for there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few.] He speaks with some Diffidence to his Servant : but was inwardly persuaded of a certain Victory, by the Divine Assistance.

Ver. 7. *And his Armour-bearer said unto him, Do all that is in thine Heart ; turn thee.]* Which way thou wilt.

Behold, I am with thee according to thy Heart.] He resolved not to forsake his Master in any Undertaking, tho' ever so dangerous : Being such a Servant as Gideon had, Judges vii. 10.

Ver. 8. *Then said Jonathan, Behold, I will pass over to these Men.]* He resolves to lead the way.

And we will discover our selves unto them.] At Break of Day.

Ver. 9. *If they say thus unto us, Tarry until we come unto you, then we will stand still in our place, and will not go up unto them.*

Ver. 10. *But if they say thus, Come up to us, then we will go up ; for the LORD hath delivered them into our hand : and this shall be a Sign unto us.]* Which we could not have known without an Instinct from God, who often suggested such Thoughts unto good Men : As we see in the Example of Abraham's Servant, Gen. xxiv. 14, &c. And there is something like this, in the beginning of Herodotus his fifth Book concerning the Pæones, and the Perinthians. Where he saith the Pæonians went to War by a Divine Direction with the Perinthians ; and were ordered, if the Perinthians being opposed to them, provoked them by name to fight, then they should invade them ; but if they did not, they should abstain from fighting. Now when they faced one another there happened a three-fold single Combat : and the Perinthians being Victors in two of them, began to sing a Song of Triumph, and insult over the Pæonians ; who thereupon said one to another, *νῦν αὖ εἴη ὁ χρησμὸς ἐπιτελεσμένῳ ἡμῖν, νῦν ἡμέτερον τὸ ἔργον.* Now is the Oracle fulfilled to us, now is our Business ; and so shouting and falling upon the Perinthians, they vanquished them, and left few of them remaining.

Ver. 11. *And both of them discovered themselves unto the Garrison of the Philistines.]* At the bottom of the Rocks.

And the Philistines said, Behold the Hebrews come forth out of their Holes, where they had hid themselves.] xiii. 6. They imagined it was not Courage, but Necessity, which forced them to come within their View, as they sought for Food.

Ver. 12. *And the Men of the Garrison answered Jonathan and his Armour-bearer, and said, come up to us and we will show you a thing.]* They mock'd at them, thinking they durst not attempt to climb up to them.

And Jonathan said to his Armour-bearer, Come up after me, for the LORD hath delivered them into the hand of Israel.] Now he gives him the same Assurance, which he had before in his own Mind.

Ver. 13. *And Jonathan climbed up upon his Hands and his Feet, and his Armour-bearer after him.]* Not in the view of the Philistines, but by some difficult way, which none was ever known to go : And so perhaps they came behind them and surprized them.

And they fell before Jonathan, and his Armour-bearer slew after him.] The first onset was made by Jonathan (as he led the way up the Precipice) who rushed upon them with such a Fury, that he threw them down to the ground, and then his Armour-bearer killed them. So some understand this : Which was a more wonderful Action than that of Horatius Cocles (as Victorinus Strigelius observes) who alone maintained a Passage at a Bridge, against all the Forces of the Enemy ; and caused the Bridge to be broken down behind him. But that shows, that since natural Courage made a Man so daring, it is not incredible that Jonathan made such an Attempt by Divine Incitation.

Ver. 14. *The first Slaughter which Jonathan and his Armour-bearer made, was about twenty Men, within, as it were, an Half-Acre of Land, which a Yoke of Oxen might plow.]* Viz. in one Day. That is, saith Kimchi, in a very small space of Ground : Which De Dieu will have to be half a Furrow in length. See him.

Ver. 15. *And there was a trembling in the Host, in the Field, and among the People : the Garrison, and the Spoilers, they also trembled.]* News being brought of this Slaughter to the Host of the Philistines which lay in the Field, it put them into a great Consternation : For they were asleep, (it's likely) this being done very early in the Morning, as Josephus thinks, lib. 6. cap. 7. And all the People that attended the Host ; as well as the Garrison, and Spoilers who had been ravaging the Country (xiii. 17.) were very much affrighted : imagining, a great Army had been at hand to fall upon them ; of which these two were but the Scouts. Whose Exploits, perhaps, were also magnified beyond the Truth.

And the Earth quaked.] Some think there was a real Earthquake, which increased their Fear : But it may be no more than a Metaphorical Expression, for the great Tumult they were in.

So it was a great trembling.] In the Hebrew, a trembling of God, that is, which God sent upon them : Called by the Heathen a panick Fear, which they thought came from their Gods, and made the stoutest Men quake. So Pindar excellently expresses it in his Nemea ix. ver. 63.

————— Ἐν γὰρ
Δαίμονιόισι φόβος
Φεύγονταὶ καὶ Παιδες Θεῶν.

When Men are struck with divine Terrors, even the Children of the Gods (i. e. the most Heroick Spirits) betake themselves to flight. And the Army of the Philistines consisting (as I observed on xiii. 5.) of different Nations, it made the Con-

fusion and Trembling the greater : because they either did not understand, or suspected one another.

Ver. 16. *And the Watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked.]* For it was seated on an high Hill, which overlooked the Country about it.

And behold the Multitude melted away.] Were scattered ; so that fewer and fewer were seen in a Company together.

And they went on beating down one another.] Not being able, in this Confusion, to distinguish their Friends from their Enemies.

Ver. 17. *Then said Saul unto the People that were with him, Number now, and see who are gone from us : and when they were numbred, behold Jonathan and his Armour-bearer were not there.]* He easily missed Jonathan, I suppose, but could not imagine he would fall upon the Philistines, without a good Number of Men to assist him : which he knew he had not. This made him call the High-priest, to enquire of God, that he might be informed what was the matter, and what he should do.

Ver. 18. *And Saul said to Abijah, Bring hither the Ark of God ; for the Ark of God was at that time with the Children of Israel.]* How could he bid him bring the Ark, when it was at Kirjath-jearim in the House of Abinadab ? To this Abarbinel answers, that he doth not speak of the Ark in which the Tables of the Law were kept (for he doth not say, *bring the Ark of the Covenant hither*) but a little Coffin, wherein the Ephod was kept ; that is, a Breast-plate with Urim and Thummim. These the Priest brought along with him, that Saul might consult God upon occasion, as David did, 1 Sam. xxx. 8. Therefore the LXX translate it, *προάγετε τὸ Εφὸδ*, bring hither the Ephod. And so Rasi and Kimchi. See Buxtorf. Hist. Arcæ, Cap. 3. and our learned Dr. Spencer, de Leg. & Rit. Heb. fol. 859. But this doth not seem a solid Interpretation, there being but one Ark mentioned in Scripture, which is not always called the Ark of the Covenant, but the Ark of the LORD, or the Ark of God, as it is called when it came into the Camp of Israel, and was taken by the Philistines, Chap. iv. Ver. 6, 11, 17, 18, &c. Therefore here, I suppose, Saul commanded the Ark itself to attend him ; when he wanted the Advice and Assistance of Samuel.

Ver. 19. *And it came to pass, that while Saul talked with the Priest.]* Desiring him to enquire of God, what was become of Jonathan, and his Armour-bearer ; and what was the meaning of that Tumult in the Host of the Philistines.

That the Noise that was in the Host of the Philistines went on and increased, and Saul said to the Priest, withdraw thine Hand.] He was going to take the Urim and Thummim, as the fore-named Authors understand it, when Saul hearing the Tumult grow greater and greater among the Philistines, bid him forbear : There being no need, for he concluded they were routed ; and therefore resolved without any further Deliberation to go and pursue them. Or, as others understand it, the Priest having stretched forth his Hand to God in Prayer for his Advice, Saul called upon him to desist :

For it is plain what they had to do, without any Enquiry.

Ver. 20. *And Saul and all the People that were with him, assembled, and came to the Battle, and behold, every Man's Sword was against his Fellow, and there was a very great Discomfiture.]* This Josephus thinks fell out (as I noted above) because their Army consisted of divers Nations, who did not know one another, and so fell into Confusion.

Ver. 21. *Moreover the Hebrews that were with the Philistines before that time, which went up with them into the Camp, from the Country round about.]* As some, it seems, did ; either out of Fear, Compulsion, or Design.

Even they also turned to be with the Israelites that were with Saul and Jonathan.] And helped to destroy the Philistines.

Ver. 22. *Likewise all the Men of Israel that had hid themselves in Mount Ephraim.]* And other Places, mentioned xiii. 6.

When they heard that the Philistines fled, even they also followed hard after them in the Battle.] Pursued them closely.

Ver. 23. *So the LORD saved Israel that day, and the Battle passed over unto Beth-aven.]* These Words seem to imply, that the Fight continued till they came to this Place ; which lay westward from Michmash (xiii. 5.) and there the Philistines threw down their Arms ; and fled as fast as they could towards their own Country.

Ver. 24. *And the Men of Israel were distressed that day.]* When they should have been full of Joy and Triumph.

For Saul had adjured the People, saying, Cursed be the Man that eateth any Food until the Evening, that I may be avenged of my Enemies ; so none of the People tasted any Food.] That they might not lose time, or make the least Stay in the Pursuit of their Enemies, who fled before them. The King had the same Power that the great Sanhedrim had, who, the Jews say, might devote those to Destruction, who did not obey the Charge that was given them in War. See Selden, Lib. 4. de Jure Nat. & Gent. cap. 6. But this was a very indiscreet Act in Saul, unbecoming an excellent Captain, for instead of pursuing the Philistines with Vigour, they fainted for want of Refreshment. Therefore great Commanders always took care their Soldiers should be moderately fed, that they might not be tired in a long Conflict. So Vegetius informs us, lib. 3. de Re militari, cap. 9. *Veteribus seculis mos fuit, parco cibo curatos milites ad certamen educere, ut citatiores sumpta esca redderet, & longiore consuetu, non fatigerentur inedia :* And there was the same need of taking a little Refreshment if they could get it, when they were engaged in a long Pursuit of their Enemy.

Ver. 25. *And all they of the Land came to a Wood, and there was Honey upon the Ground.]* Which dropped from the hollow Trees, or the Clefts of Rocks, where Bees made their Combs in that Country ; and sometimes upon the very Ground ; as Bochart hath shown in his Hierozoicon, P. 2. Lib. 4. Cap. 12. where he observes this was not peculiar to Judæa, but usual in other Countries.